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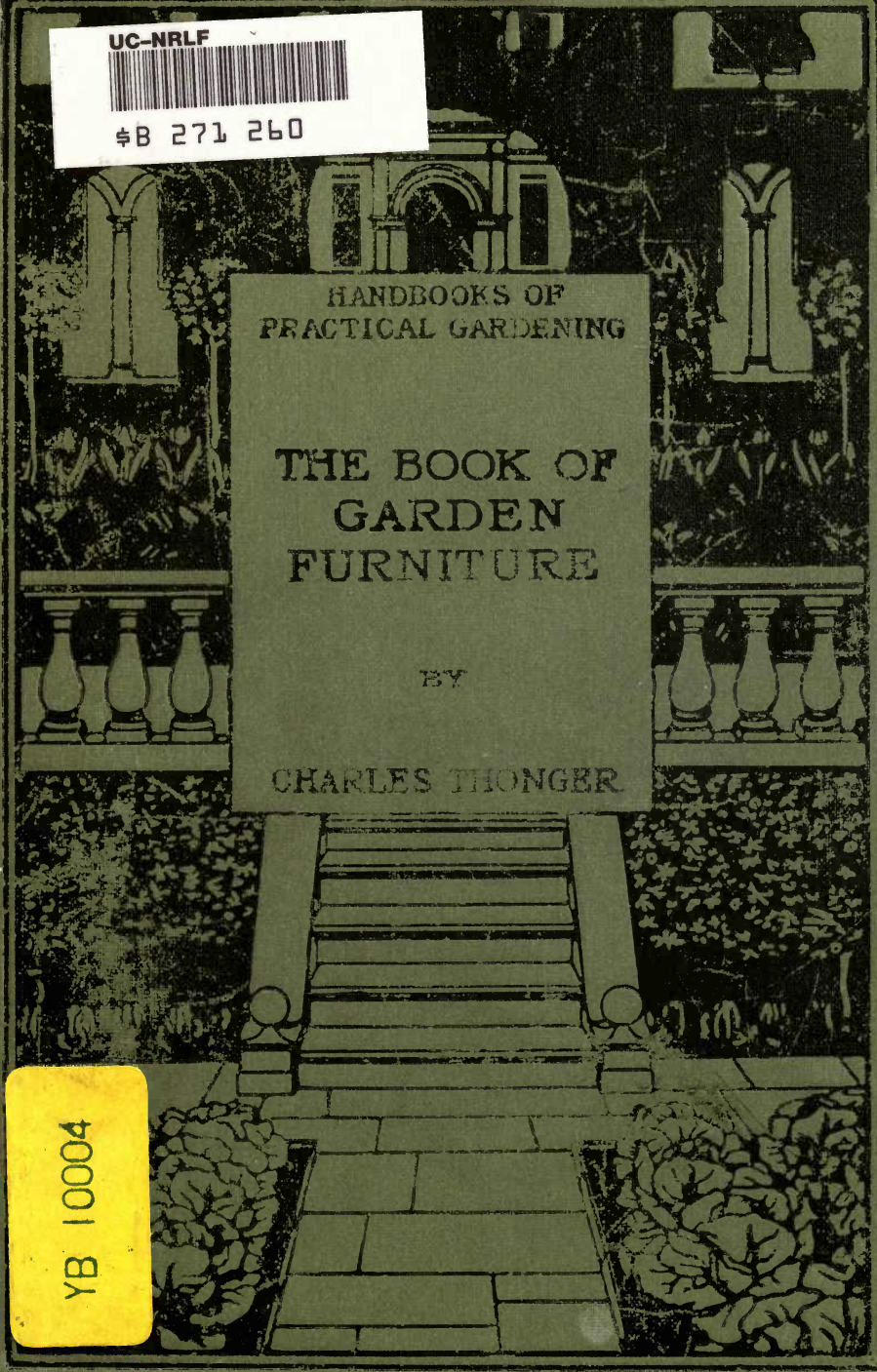

HANDBOOKS OF PRACTICAL GARDENING

THE BOOK OF GARDEN FURNITURE

BY

CHARLES THONGER

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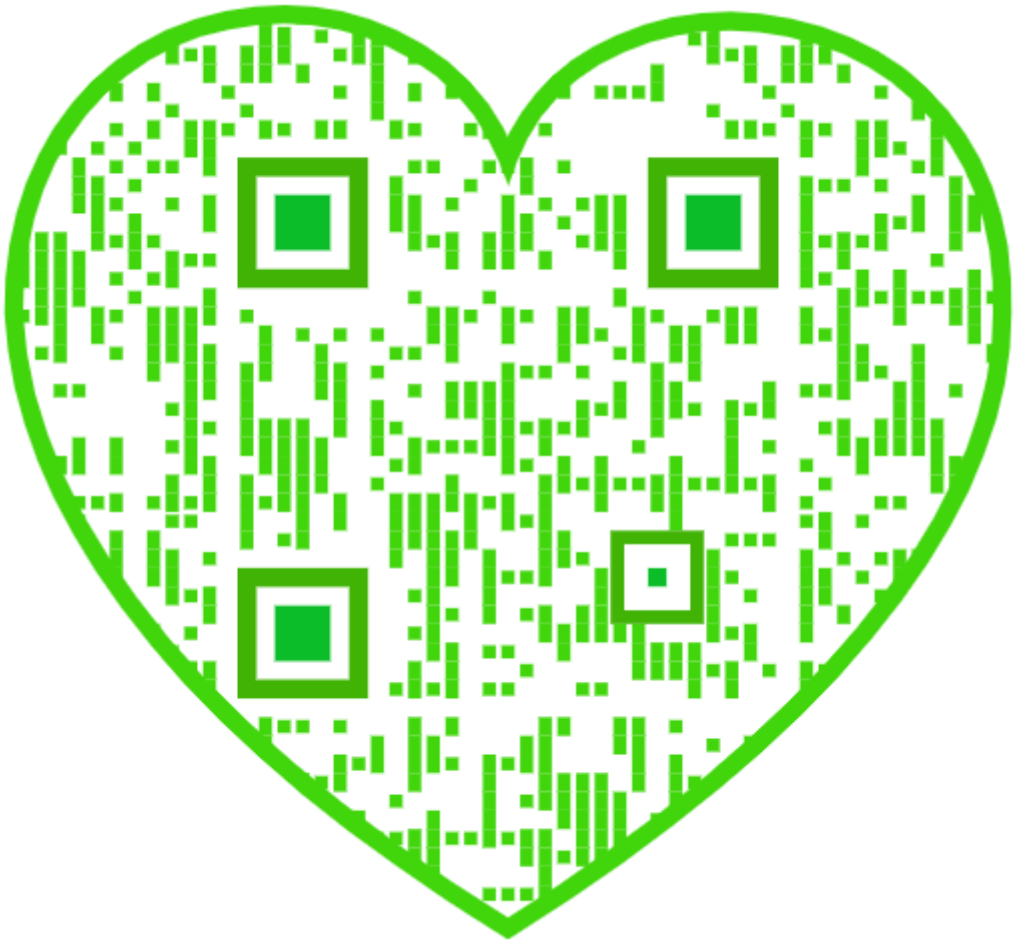

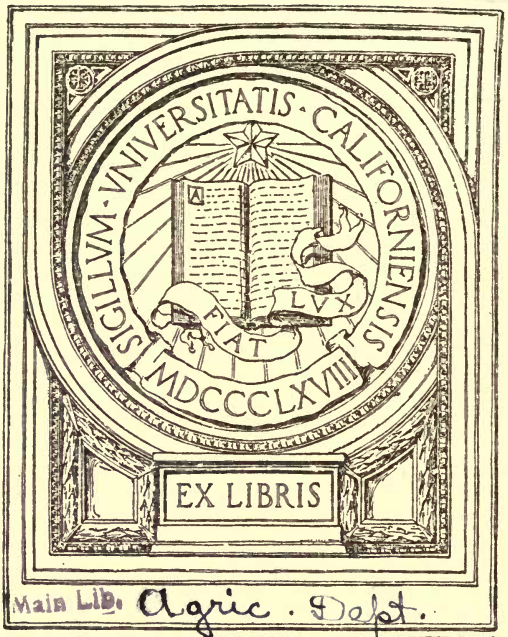

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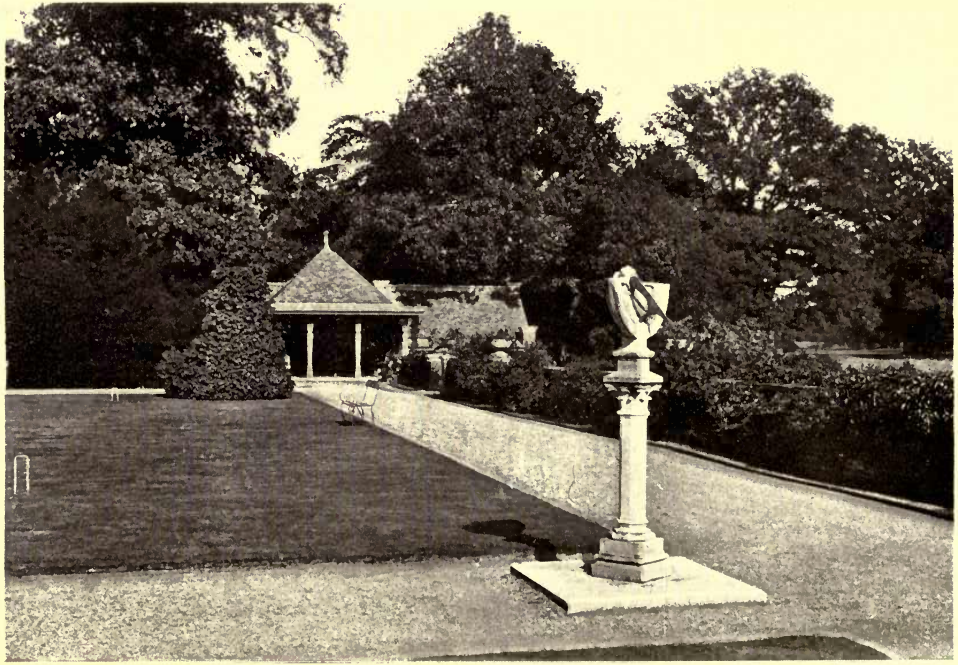
THE BOOK OF GARDEN FURNITURE



GARDEN HOUSE AND SUNDIAL AT ELVETHAM PARK

THE BOOK OF GARDEN FURNITURE

BY

CHARLES THONGER

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PREFACE

AMONG garden structures dealt with in this book are summer-houses, arbours, pergolas, bridges, and fencing of various descriptions. As these, strictly speaking, do not come under the general heading of garden furniture, it may be well to explain that, in order to prevent a cumbersome and lengthy title, I have taken the liberty of including them as such.

My obligations are due to Loudon's "Encyclopædia of Gardening" for information respecting the early employment of "furniture" in gardens of various countries.

I beg also to offer my hearty acknowledgments to Mr. White of the Pyghtle, Bedford, to Messrs. Boulton & Paul of Norwich, to Messrs. Doulton of Lambeth, and to Messrs. Pulham & Son, Broxbourne, for so kindly placing their very admirable series of sketches and photographs at my disposal.

C. T.

WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK,
June, 1903.

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CHAPTER I

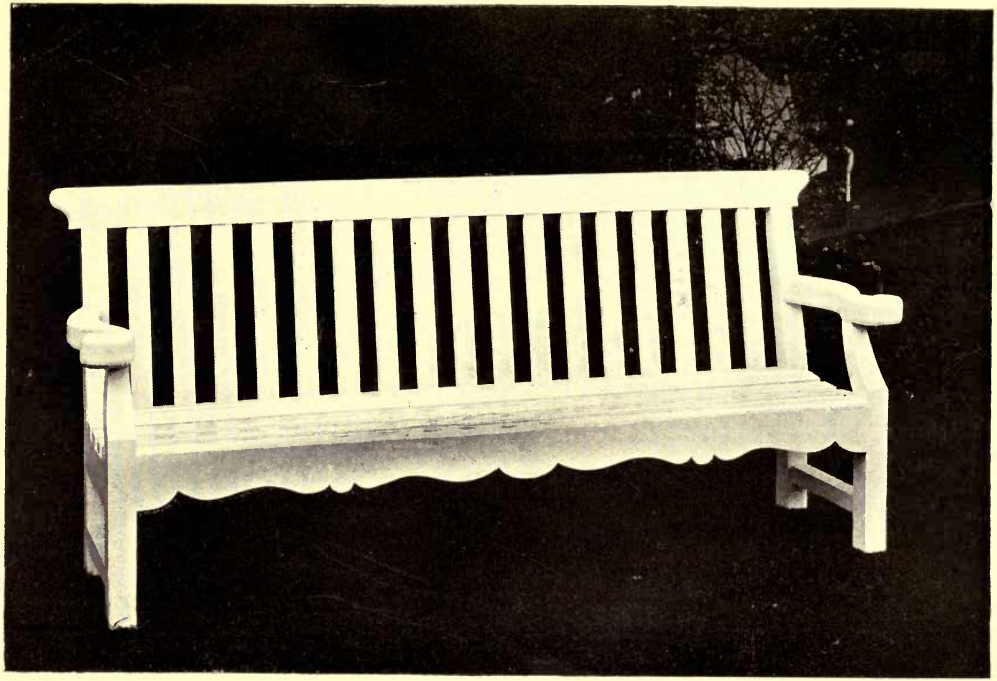
GARDEN FURNITURE

BEAUTIFUL flowers, well-kept lawns and noble trees—these do not make good gardens, and this fact must be my excuse for writing these pages. In striving after artistic effects, mere cultural skill will avail us nothing, if we do not possess that faculty for grouping and arrangement which is inseparable from the skilled gardener. Further, we must be prepared to expend a considerable amount of thought and care on those objects of garden furniture, which have come to be regarded either as necessities or as desirable adjuncts to the well-kept pleasure grounds. It is more than possible to completely spoil an otherwise good effect by the introduction of unsuitable or ugly summer-houses, seats, sundials, and statuary ; and I shall endeavour briefly to indicate the styles suited to various gardens, the manufacture of those which can be made without skilled assistance, and the positions which each may occupy to the best advantage.

In early times, buildings and decorations in stone and wood were much more freely employed in gardens than they are to-day, and vast sums were spent in ancient Rome and Greece on these costly objects. Varro's garden at Casinum contained, among other costly features, bridges, a large aviary, and open-air temples. During the Augustan age, statues and fountains appear to have been introduced ; and among the wonders of Pliny's famous Tusculan gardens were summer-houses in dazzling marble,

alcoves, and seats, near which bubbled tiny fountains. Urns and statues were much used for the decoration of gardens by the celebrated Cardinal d'Este, early in the sixteenth century, and the fashion quickly spread from one European country to another. During the seventeenth century, Evelyn, then on a visit to Italy, gives his impressions of some of the gardens which he visited. Treillage was evidently appreciated, for he tells of "a magnificent wire cupola supported by slender brick piers, and thickly covered with ivy." At Frascati, Naples, and Florence, the great villas vied with one another in the sumptuous magnificence of their garden decorations. Whole courtyards were given over to a display of fountains, besides which the modern marvels of Chatsworth would surely pale into insignificance. Statues costing enormous sums, vases and urns of prodigious size and exquisite workmanship, were lavishly employed. In such a fashion did the wealth of the cardinals, to whom Italy owes most of its great villas, find outlet.

Next to Italy, France is the country which has always displayed the greatest preference for artificial embellishment in the garden. One of the most celebrated designers was Le Notre, and under Louis XIV. he had ample encouragement to display his talent. The gardens of the Tuilleries, Versailles, Trianon, and St. Cloud all owed their splendour to his skill, which did not pass unrewarded. Fountains with extraordinary figures, gilt trellis-work, statues and therms, all were to be found in the great gardens with which he was connected. In later years, when the fashion for the English style of garden came in, these costly structures were swept away with ruthless hand. Spanish gardens were usually well supplied with fountains, arbours, and trellis structures, but the formal style was little seen except in the extensive grounds attached to the old palaces. In England, the climate has always been against the excessive use of



A GARDEN SEAT

buildings in perishable materials, fountains, and other objects, which, though appropriate in summer, are sadly out of keeping with the winter landscape. During Queen Elizabeth's reign, the gardens at Hatfield, which have always maintained a high reputation, contained much statuary, together with fountains and summer-houses. In James I.'s time, Theobald's is described by Mandelso as being extensively decorated with fillery or trellis-work. Garden buildings are supposed to have been first erected during the reign of Charles II., and they served a variety of purposes, but were chiefly used for banquets. Iron screens and gateways, arched treillage and urns, were to be seen in most of the large gardens of the time. Reference to some of the old gardening books will furnish abundant proof of the popularity which garden furniture has enjoyed during almost every age. Occasionally it was lamentably overdone, at other times banished altogether, and the constant disagreement between extremists led to the perpetration of the most absurd follies.

This brings us to an important question, one which must be duly considered before we can hope to achieve any good results with garden furniture. What is its true place in the gardens of to-day? Is it to occupy a leading or subordinate position among the many details which go to make up a satisfactory *ensemble?* Those who have seen a great variety of gardens and noted by what means the best effects are usually obtained, will seldom hesitate in declaring that the less of it the better. If this be true why devote a whole book to its discussion? For the simple reason, that the little we use must be good of its kind, simple and artistic in construction—all of which points are only too frequently violated. Although many accessories of this description are in bad taste, and serve only to demonstrate a desire for mere opulent display, it must not be thought that "furniture" is unimportant,

and as such deserving of little consideration. Seats, statuary, sundials, and trellis-work are, in good hands, just as much the making of the garden as, in bad, they are the marring of it. What often serves to impress a particularly good piece of garden landscape upon our memory? Is it not frequently a small arbour, an old-fashioned seat, or quaint sundial, which forms the central object, giving requisite finish and point, and connecting, in one harmonious whole, scattered masses of flower and foliage? Seeing, then, the prominent positions which these objects are likely to occupy, it is more than ever necessary that they should be of considerable merit, a reflection of the owner's good taste, and not his lack of it.

Unfortunately most English gardeners depend upon the ironmonger or general dealer in garden requisites for their "furniture," and, without wishing to condemn this class of goods as altogether bad, in nine cases out of ten they are nothing less than eyesores in the average garden. I shall have occasion, later on, to refer more particularly to these rustic atrocities, summer-houses and arbours, the ugly galvanised arches and trellis, and seats in crudely designed cast iron; for the present, I would urge gardeners to have nothing to do with them. Cheap they seldom are, of ornamental features there are none; and as for utility, there are few which tend to show that such an idea ever entered the heads of their builders. There are a few firms to whom we owe a debt of gratitude, in that they have had the courage to depart from the traditions governing this class of garden ornament, and have set to work to evolve new and artistic designs, and have carried them out in suitable materials. But these are sadly in the minority, and the advertisements of the cheap dealers in horticultural requisites plainly evidence the scope of their business, and the extent of their yearly output. Each and every style of garden

A GARDEN SEAT

requires "furniture" that shall be in keeping, and the incongruity of including a Sheraton chair in a Louis Seize drawing-room, would be no worse than the placing of a rustic bench in a formal terrace scheme, or an elaborate marble fountain in a garden where natural planting and arrangement is closely followed.

With the exception perhaps of sundials and statuary, garden furniture should be made to serve a useful purpose, and it appears to greatest advantage when this utility is not sacrificed in any way. For example, a bridge exists for the express purpose of crossing a piece of water ; if it can be made ornamental so much the better, but its original use must be kept clearly in view. This accounts for the fact that bridges spanning imaginary streams or erected on dry land are objects of ridicule to all who can appreciate their absurdity. It is useless to place a seat where it would not offer the slightest inducement for a halt and rest ; and a summer-house which is too hot to sit in except in cool weather, has no right to exist in the garden. Congruity, again, is to be thought of when introducing "furniture" among surroundings which are usually foreign to artificiality of any kind. The sundial, though charming enough in isolated spots where there is ample inducement for rest and meditation, is sadly out of keeping in gardens facing a busy thoroughfare, or where the distant view is rudely obstructed by a vulgar advertisement hoarding. Statues are out of place in small villa gardens, though appropriate enough near the villas of Italy.

Having decided that our "furniture" is both useful and suited to its surroundings, there is still the question of design to be considered. Mere ornamental elaboration can never be otherwise than objectionable, being altogether opposed to the simplicity and infinite charm of the effects which Nature herself supplies in the garden. How paltry must carvings in wood and stone look beside the

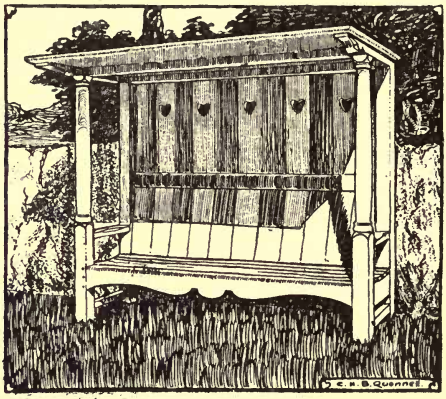
marvellous beauty of even the most homely flower! What workman could ever hope to accomplish anything half so intricate and dainty as the union of leaf and bud, tendril and blossom, to make the perfect plant! Our "furniture" is not intended to rival the denizens of the garden in its complicated finish, but rather to act as a foil, and show them, if possible, to even greater advantage. To put it briefly, utility, sound construction, and freedom from needless ornament are the points we must look for in garden furniture of the best class; one is of little use without the others. Employed with discretion, obtruding it as little as possible, and yet seeking to make it a decided feature in the garden scene, "furniture" will do much towards the accomplishment of genuinely beautiful results. The opposite effect can only be expected where little thought is bestowed on its selection and disposal, or when it is used merely because there is a desire to imitate the example of our neighbours under widely different conditions. With these few words of introduction, I commend the detailed consideration of garden furniture to the notice of my readers.

CHAPTER II

SEATS

THE seat is the earliest form of garden furniture, and between the felled tree-stump, which served our ancestors as a convenient resting-place, and the elaborate structures which are to be seen in modern gardens, there are a great variety of styles—good, bad, and indifferent. Notwithstanding the progress which has been made in the decorative arts of this country during the last decade, the furniture intended for our gardens still retains its reputation for being hopelessly crude and inartistic. Especially so is this the case with the class which we are now considering, and of which William Robinson has said, "It is rare to see a garden seat that is not an eyesore." Why this should be so is somewhat difficult to understand, for neither in design nor construction is there any great difficulty to overcome. The fact that a large proportion of garden-seats are home-made proves that the fault must occur in the style adopted, rather than in the matter of workmanship. One of the indirect reasons for comments such as the above, is probably due to a certain mock-professionalism, which seems to be an easily acquired attribute of some of our latter-day amateurs. They do not care for much beauty in the garden as a whole, but are ambitious to remember the Latin names of all their plants, the ancestors of each, and as many sub-varieties as possible. Their beds are turned into nursery plots, the herbaceous flowers in the border

are all provided with painted labels, and it is plainly evident that the ultimate ambition of such gardeners is a certificate of merit at the next flower show. In these cases it is hardly a matter for surprise that little thought is bestowed on the selection and arrangement of such apparently unimportant trifles as seats and other articles of furniture. Yet these afford the surest index of the taste, or lack of it, displayed by the owner, and it is safe



COVERED GARDEN SEAT.

to say that no garden can be really beautiful if the chief points of interest are occupied by objects of obtrusive and inartistic design.

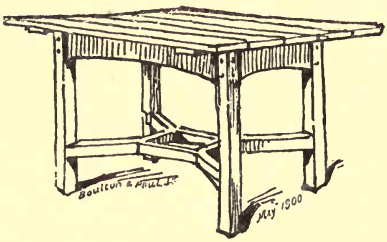
There are so many different kinds of garden seats, that it will be well to consider them in two classes—those which require skilled workmen to manufacture them, and must therefore be purchased ready made, and others of a more rustic nature, which may be made on the place, with or without the assistance of a handy carpenter. Bought seats are generally of stone, wood, iron,

CIRCULAR GARDEN SEAT

or a combination of the two latter. Stone seats are somewhat expensive, especially when they are elaborately carved, but in certain gardens they are the only kind which are really suitable, or capable of harmonising successfully with the general style and arrangement. It cannot be denied that they are somewhat cold and cheerless, and are in many ways more suited to the gardens of Spain and Italy, than those in our damp and uncertain climate. However, they can always be provided with a lattice wooden seat, which can be removed and stored away in the winter, and their cold appearance may be relieved by planting brightly coloured flowers, in vases or jars, somewhere in the immediate vicinity. The sites for stone seats require to be very carefully chosen, more especially as, on account of their weight, they are nearly always permanencies. This refers particularly, perhaps, to the more elaborate forms, those supplied with a back and side arms. Such seats cannot well be placed in gardens which do not contain some other description of stonework, either in the form of terracing, vases, urns, or edgings. In comparatively small and unpretentious places they look cumbersome, and, being without a suitable foil, the eye is drawn at once towards them, with undesirable effect. The cheaper and less ornate style, that of a single slab resting on a couple of supports, is much easier to place, and looks well in a variety of situations. The base of a low stone wall, beside a clipped yew hedge, or even among trees in the woodland scene, are all spots where a simple form of stone bench will look well. Seats which have no back always look best when placed close against a support; they have a stiff, uncomfortable appearance when stood out in the open, on grass or gravel. As a rule, they do not harmonise well with brickwork, but if the latter be well mellowed by age, there is less objection.

On elevated sites, commanding a view of other parts of

the garden, excellent effect may be obtained by constructing a small enclosure, half arbour, half balcony. A low stone wall, about three feet high, might enclose three or only two of the sides; a few rough slabs of stone would form a suitable flooring, and overhead a light wooden framework, supported either on stone pillars or stout wooden uprights, would look well. A stone bench, running close along the wall, would make a convenient seat from which to enjoy the prospect, and the trellis might be covered either with Rambler roses, or purple and white clematis. Some such arrangement would not cost much, at any rate in a district where rough stone is plentiful, and would be very suitable for the side of a hill or other position, where it is difficult to lay out a regular garden with turf and flowering plants. Modern gardeners no longer go to the expense of putting up the small stone temples, which were at one time considered a fitting adornment for knolls and mounds: in some few cases they looked fairly appropriate, but were more often too severe to harmonise with any but the most formal attempts at garden design. Stone seats can never be really comfortable, but the same may be said of almost any style of permanent resting-place; the idea of such structures is to add interest and point to the garden scene, and to afford merely a convenient spot at which to halt for a few minutes. For lounging in the garden for any length of time, the majority will prefer chairs; though some of the latter, when supplied with striped awnings and Japanese umbrellas, cannot be said to



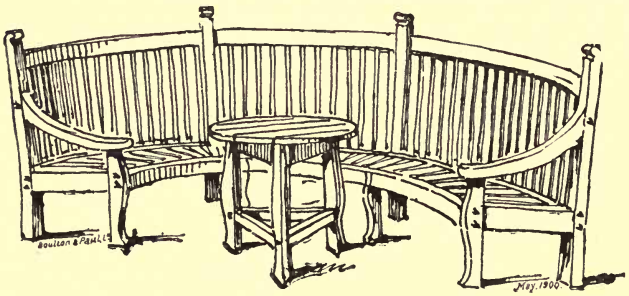
GARDEN TABLE.

improve the appearance of the landscape. The simpler the construction of stone seats, the better, and, I may add, the cheaper, for nothing raises the cost of these so much as the introduction of lions' heads, ornamental frieze designs, and supporting figures. The best shapes are perfectly plain, or nearly so, the back perhaps slightly panelled, and the ends the familiar bracket, with as little scroll work as possible. If the seat is not placed on a terrace or paved walk, it should stand on a slab or bed of concrete. A variety of designs may now be procured in artificial stone, which soon weathers a good colour, and is for all practical purposes as durable as the genuine material. Small seats for one person do not as a rule look well in stone, though often a wall recess between two buttresses, or the embrasure of a disused doorway, may be fittingly occupied in this manner.

The garden seat constructed entirely of wood, with which we are most familiar, is that made of rough branches, and dignified by the name of "rustic-work." This material is the despair of all good garden architects, who often have the chagrin of seeing their best work spoilt by its introduction in the form of tables, chairs, and other portable articles of furniture. For supreme discomfort the rustic garden seat is not to be equalled, and, owing to the intricacies of its design, it is impossible to clean it when it becomes dirty, which is usually very soon. Give the village hurdle-maker a free hand, and he will evolve a truly wonderful arrangement of twisted and contorted woodwork, and proudly point to it as a work of art, and an ornament to any garden. I once saw a wooden seat, completely covered with a design in fir cones, and numerous others carried out in impossible materials, the whole suggesting refined instruments of torture, rather than objects for ornament and some degree of comfort. The makers of rustic seats have their living to make, and so long as the public want their goods we

must put up with these eyesores, but it will be a matter for supreme congratulation in the interests of garden art in this country, when these rustic excrescences become as obsolete as the painted iron mushrooms, which were once considered to form highly ornamental seats.

Having regard to the need which exists for simple and artistic designs in wood, it is satisfactory to see that a very high standard has been set by the manufacturers or goods emanating from the Pyghtle works at Bedford. The majority of their seats are made either in deal,



OLD-ENGLISH SEAT AND TABLE.

painted green or white, or in dark oak, varnished. The latter are, of course, the more durable and look very well, but in some cases a painted seat is equally appropriate. The extreme simplicity of such shapes as the "Peacock" and "Biddenham" make them most desirable; and for those who like an appropriate quotation, there is a design on which the familiar lines from Omar Khayyám, "A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou," is carved. At the termination of walks, or on the grass plot surrounding an old sundial, a semi-circular seat will look well, and many of the designs may be carried out so as to fit any sized recess. Others are constructed so as to

completely encircle the trunk of a tree, though these are hardly so comfortable, and moreover have not the sociable appearance of the others. A disadvantage, which certainly attends permanent resting-places which are not in constant use, is that they soon become dirty. To obviate this, there is a bench made with a hinged back, which falls over and protects the seat when not in use. It is a good plan where seats are stood by the side of grass paths, or in situations where the ground is likely to be somewhat damp, to make a small paving of bricks or odd-shaped stones, this adding to the importance of the seat, and making its use possible even after heavy rain. In some gardens the idea is amplified, and a small brick platform is made, which still further tends to lessen the effect of damp, and helps to preserve the seat itself from decay.

Iron seats are durable, and quite admissible where utility and not picturesque effect is the object in view. However, they should be very plainly made, without adornment of any kind. Some of the designs in cast iron are second only to those in rustic work in point of ugliness, especially objectionable being those which are embellished with bunches of grapes and complicated tracery. Seats made of iron laths are apt to be somewhat comfortless, but this may easily be overcome by making a split bamboo top, which can be laid on in fine weather. There is but little to recommend the iron and pitch-pine seats which are to be found in every ironmonger's catalogue—the designs being rarely, if ever, artistic, and the plain wood are much nicer, and offer a far greater choice. When purchasing this class of furniture, it is well to give a good price and obtain something worth looking at; if economy is desirable and only third-rate designs can be afforded, it will be far better to be content with a home-made bench, which, if not pretentious, may be at least artistic. Of course this will not be of a portable nature, strength rather than elegance being the object

in view, but in any case the village carpenter would have no difficulty in making one which could be lifted from place to place. Made somewhat on the plan of the benches to be seen in country inns, with, of course, rather less solidity, a vastly better effect will be obtained than with those which the ironmonger supplies, and the cost will be little if any more.

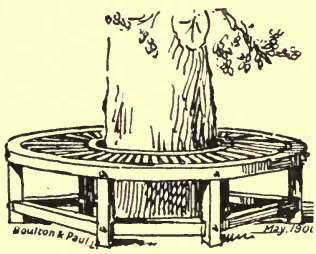
One of the easiest seats for the amateur to make is formed of half a dozen logs, and a few rough slabs of oak. The logs are secured together in two bundles of three, using either long nails or stout wire for the purpose. These are laid on the ground at the required distance apart, and one or two slabs, according to the width, are nailed from one to the other. A few rough pieces of wood will form a back, or it may be left as it is. When grown over with moss and lichen this looks very well in the wilder parts of the garden, where, however, a seat of some kind is very necessary, and it is too far from the house to carry one. A mat of bamboo or laths should be made to fit this kind of seat, which naturally is not calculated to improve the clothes after a few seasons exposure. Occasionally the trunk of an old tree will, after a little trimming, form quite a presentable seat, but when once decay fairly sets in, it is of little further use, and the bark is generally a hiding-place for woodlice and other insects. Where stone exists in plenty, boulders, which have been deftly fashioned by Nature, are not at all inappropriate in gardens; some of the most comfortable seats I ever saw were rough blocks of stone from a neighbouring quarry, set in the garden and allowed to become moss grown. A stonemason's yard is very likely to yield some suitable slabs, which may be utilised for excellent seats. Perhaps they contain some flaw, or are not of sufficiently good quality for working, and may therefore be picked up cheaply. A couple of stone supports are all that is necessary, and

a useful and not unpicturesque seat may be made at once. Old steps and other débris from the housebreaker can frequently be utilised to good effect, and with a little ingenuity these rustic attempts are often more desirable than the most expensive design. After what I have said, the amateur will not be tempted to try his hand at the branchwork seats or ponderous armchairs, choosing rather to make the use of carpenter's tools as little in evidence as possible. In gardens of any size there is material for numbers of excellent seats, and so long as they are not intended for use on lawns, or in the highly cultivated parts, there need be no desire for complex designs in highly varnished wood or ugly ironwork.

Before concluding this chapter, it may be well to briefly consider the most suitable positions for the placing of permanent seats, and also how best to furnish them with shelter and shade. Most gardens contain some particular point from which they look their best, or from which some distant view is opened up through a gap in the trees. It may not be convenient to place a seat exactly at this point, but whenever possible the resting-place should command an interesting, not to say beautiful, part of the grounds. Seats are never likely to be much occupied if they only face an uninteresting wall or dull corner, where there is little to attract the eye. Even in the smallest gardens there is some spot on which the eye rests with more pleasure than any other, and, needless to say, the back of the seat should always be directed towards any feature which may be considered unsightly. A blind walk, if such exist, generally requires a seat at the end of it, to form as it were an object for which the path was made. In hilly gardens, seats require to be placed at frequent intervals; it is hopeless to expect our friends to appreciate our flowers, if we drag them up hill and down dale, without an opportunity of resting for a few moments. Where there is running water, there

should always be an inducement for remaining for a time, listening to its music, which will be all the more agreeable on a hot day.

Too often gardeners forget to provide shelter and shade in connection with garden seats, a point which should receive the utmost consideration in a climate such as ours. We seldom sit outdoors in England unless the day is really warm, which means that the sun is probably uncomfortably brilliant. On this account, seats which are placed in the more exposed portions of the grounds will be little used, at any rate until the evening. If there are no shady corners or sheltered walks where permanent seats would be appreciated, a light framework of branches should be made, and a miniature arbour formed, over which suitable climbers may be trained. Such spots are more airy than the summer-house, which, unless constructed on a rather different principle to the majority which are now built, is apt to be extremely stuffy on a hot day. The vicinity of ivy should, as a rule, be avoided, as it is generally very dirty and harbours insects innumerable. Yew does not possess this disadvantage to such an extent, and, in old-fashioned gardens, bowers of considerable size are to be found cut out of the heart of the fine old hedges, which lend such an air of quaint formality to the place. By making free use of such climbers as *Clematis montana*, the honeysuckle and vine, light shelters may be made in quite a short time, and will require but very light supports. A recess or two in the pergola, if the garden contains this beautiful feature, will form another



TREE SEAT.

cool retreat where a bench would be much appreciated. Above all, the garden seat should not be far from more substantial shelter; heavy showers frequently come on almost at a moment's notice, and, when engrossed in a book, one is often caught unawares, and a long run means perhaps a thorough wetting. A seat is essential even in the smallest garden; in those of large size many will be required, so that, unlike some articles of furniture, it is found practically everywhere. Now that the opportunity exists of introducing the charming old-world designs, which add so much to the artistic effect of modern pleasure grounds, we should hasten to rid ourselves of garden furniture which is much of it downright ugly, and in many cases humorously grotesque.

CHAPTER III

GARDEN AND SUMMER HOUSES

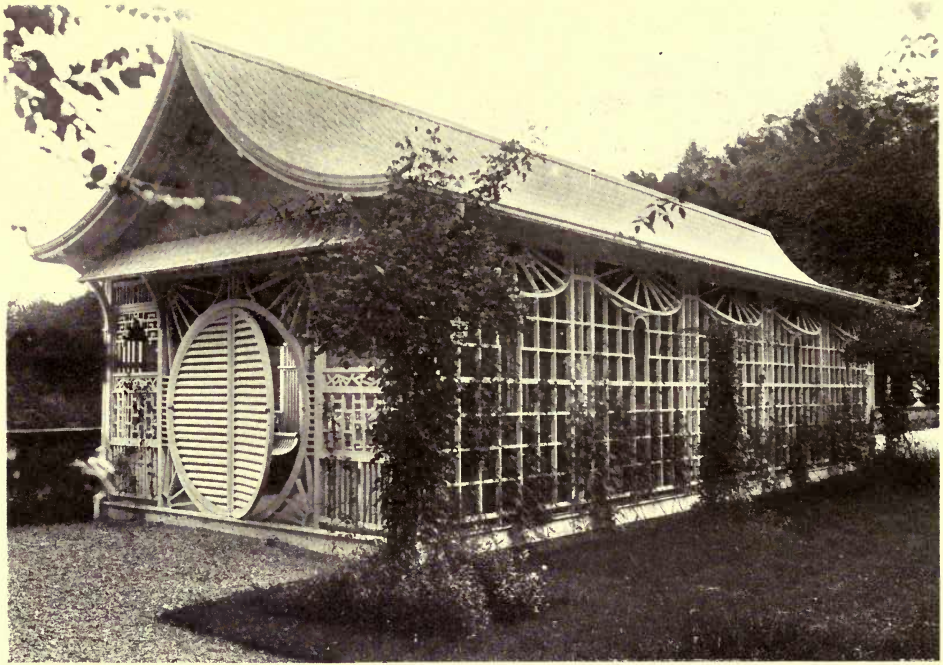
THERE are few objects better calculated to lend an air of character and distinction to the garden than a well-built summer-house, and certainly none more liable to make it an artistic failure than those of ugly and commonplace design. There is a certain fascination in sitting out of doors when the weather is suitable, and even the smallest villa gardens have their summer-houses, such as they most of them are. It is rare indeed to find that much thought has been bestowed on the choice of a suitable structure, still less on the site it is to occupy, and the numbers of English gardens which are disfigured by flimsily constructed matchwood erections is a matter for keen regret. Though a summer-house of some description is to be found in almost every garden, a very large proportion of them serve no good purpose whatever—they are neither ornamental, nor are they ever used. Certainly some of them serve as a storehouse for croquet mallets and tennis nets, but, as for sitting in them, the idea is out of the question. In hot weather they are unbearably stuffy, in cold they are draughty; and, when free from such disadvantages, the seats are so narrow and uncomfortable, that we generally find a few rugs on the ground are considered far preferable to sit upon. I am speaking, of course, of the orthodox summer-house, which can be purchased ready built from manufacturers of "rustic" furniture; those which have been built by the amateur

are generally far less objectionable, but yet capable of great improvement. The five-pound note, which is a doubtful exchange for one of these highly varnished wooden sheds, would have covered the cost of a really artistic structure, not only substantial but useful as well, which could be made by any one with the slightest knowledge of the use of tools. But before proceeding to describe the simplest forms, which are suitable for quite small gardens, there are more pretentious buildings which deserve, at any rate, passing notice.

A garden-house is a delightful feature in grounds of some magnitude, and under circumstances where a considerable outlay is not objected to, as it is of necessity a somewhat costly structure. Costly, that is, by comparison with the summer-house, but in reality very inexpensive when its utility and charming appearance are fully taken into account. A small garden-house is especially useful where there are children, as it can be fitted up with a small stove for experimental cookery, as well as with shelves and cupboards to contain their books and collections of birds' eggs and butterflies. On a wet day the children can be banished here for hours at a time, and their delight at having a little house of their own, where they can play the part of owners, is only equalled by their parents' relief at having them happily employed well out of hearing. A good house of this description would contain a couple of small rooms: one fitted as a miniature kitchen, where cakes could be made for afternoon tea; the other as a sitting-room, supplied with comfortable rush chairs, a good-sized table, and a few cupboards. A wide verandah might run round two or even three of the sides, and the whole should be well elevated, with a few steps leading up to the door. Such a building could be designed by any competent architect, and constructed of cheap but durable materials, and, without any attempt at needless decorations, would really cost comparatively little. It

should be placed so that it is partly screened from the hot sun, and should not be too far from the house itself; a paved walk leading from one to the other would be a great convenience in wet weather. A garden-house would often be a welcome addition in grounds which command a view of some interesting scene, such as those which are situated on a cliff and overlook the sea, with its constant interest of passing vessels. A summer-house would hardly be substantial enough, and moreover would not be sufficiently comfortable for remaining in for long at a time. The termination of a raised walk, which runs from the house, and gives in many cases a good view over a wide stretch of country, would be fittingly occupied by a small structure of one or two rooms. The walk could be crossed by a pergola, giving both shelter and shade, and giving a delightful means of approach. In small gardens these buildings would be quite out of place, and, apart from the question of expense, would look meaningless when seen in close proximity to the residence. In old-fashioned rambling country places, however, where there are extensive views, elevated sites, and convenient spots near woodland and shrubbery, nothing can be more charming or desirable than a simply constructed garden-house; for this reason I have briefly referred to a class of garden architecture not directly connected with the simpler forms of furniture more generally employed.

Summer-houses have existed in gardens from very early times, though they were often places of outdoor entertainment rather than mere shelters from sun and rain. By summer-house is now meant a very simple structure, usually open on one or more sides, though occasionally provided with a door or windows. Carried out in a great variety of materials, stone, brick, wood, or wattle, they can be made to harmonise with any style of garden, from the stately Italian pleasure grounds to the homely surroundings of the country cottage. Both in choice of site and



AN OPEN-AIR BREAKFAST-HOUSE

style of workmanship there is great scope for the display of artistic taste, and the garden designer will take a keen pleasure in making his summer-house harmonise with its surroundings, and at the same time prove both useful and ornamental. Buildings in stone or brick, being of greater importance than those in wood, will commend themselves to owners who require a really durable structure, which will form part of a decorative scheme carried out in similar materials. The stone summer-house seldom looks well in a garden which is devoid of any architectural features; it seems to require the association of walls and terraces, in order that it may not be unduly conspicuous. Small houses often look well recessed into a brick or stone wall, or they may fittingly occupy the end of a terrace walk, which is bounded by a low stone parapet or open balustrading. They should, of course, be designed in strict accordance with any mural work in the vicinity, and the seats, which should be roomy and comfortable, fixed at a convenient angle with the walls. A suitable material for covering the latter would be India matting, which can be procured in a variety of colours. If preferred, this style of summer-house might have one of the oak or pine seats recommended in the last chapter, instead of permanent benches fixed along the walls. This would obviate the necessity for leaning against the cold material, and the seat could be stored away in the winter time.

Very beautiful stone houses are sometimes made to cross a paved walk leading from one part of the garden to another. There are two deeply recessed seats on either side, the actual pathway forms the floor, and a highly ornamental effect may be obtained by fixing gates of some good design in bent iron work at one or other of the entrances. A roof of weathered tiles would look well, and the whole would lend an air of quaint distinction to any garden large enough to demand such a feature.

Classic summer-houses, such as exist at Margam Park, are altogether beyond the means of the ordinary gardener, and besides, until softened and mellowed with age, would look staring and obtrusive, no matter how good the design. Summer-houses in dressed stone or brick should not be erected in sight of the house proper, or, if they are, care must be taken that the styles correspond, or at any rate, harmonise effectively. The amateur will not concern himself with the construction of these more elaborate erections, but had best place himself unreservedly in the hands of a good architect. On this account I shall say nothing further of summer-houses of this description, but pass on to those of a more rustic nature, which can be made by any one versed in the use of the simpler tools, and possessed of some knowledge of rough carpentry.

The chief essentials of the rustic summer-house are simplicity of design, durability, and a certain degree of comfort. It should be cool and airy, without being draughty and damp; and should, moreover, be so placed that it may serve as a support for living plants, which will decorate it far more effectively than the choicest efforts of the worker in twisted branchings, virgin cork, and split fir-cones. In the stone counties very charming summer-houses may be built of dry rubble, and the roof thatched over with reeds or heather. They soon become moss-grown, the roof can be renewed at frequent intervals with only the cost of labour, and for the wild parts of the garden nothing can exceed these both for use and picturesque effect. Unfortunately stone is of local occurrence, and the majority of gardeners are obliged to depend upon wood in some form or other. With regard to the latter, it is perfect folly to use any but really durable kinds, as the summer-house seems fated to form a centre for decay, unless special steps are taken to prevent it. There are enough tumble-down structures, masses of

AN OPEN-AIR BREAKFAST-HOUSE (INTERIOR)

rotten woodwork abounding in insect life, without adding to their numbers; sound English oak should be the material of which the summer-house is mainly constructed. Larch is also good, but the building made of deal boards cannot be expected to remain in sound condition for long. Near clumps of trees very good summer-houses may be made of octagonal form, using stout posts sunk in the ground at each corner. Three of the sides facing the desired direction should be left open, and the rest filled in with suitable lengths of timber. The roof will look well if covered with a fairly deep thatch, but where there is a difficulty in obtaining the services of a competent man, shingling would answer. Permanent seats are not advisable, as they cannot well be made with any degree of comfort, and the whole of the interior should be left free to accommodate a table and one or two wooden chairs, which may be kept there during the summer. A mistake often made, is that of placing a large table in the centre, securing it as a permanency to the stump of a tree bedded in the ground. It fills up the space, and often leaves little or no room for a few chairs, which, as a consequence, have to be set outside in the full sun.

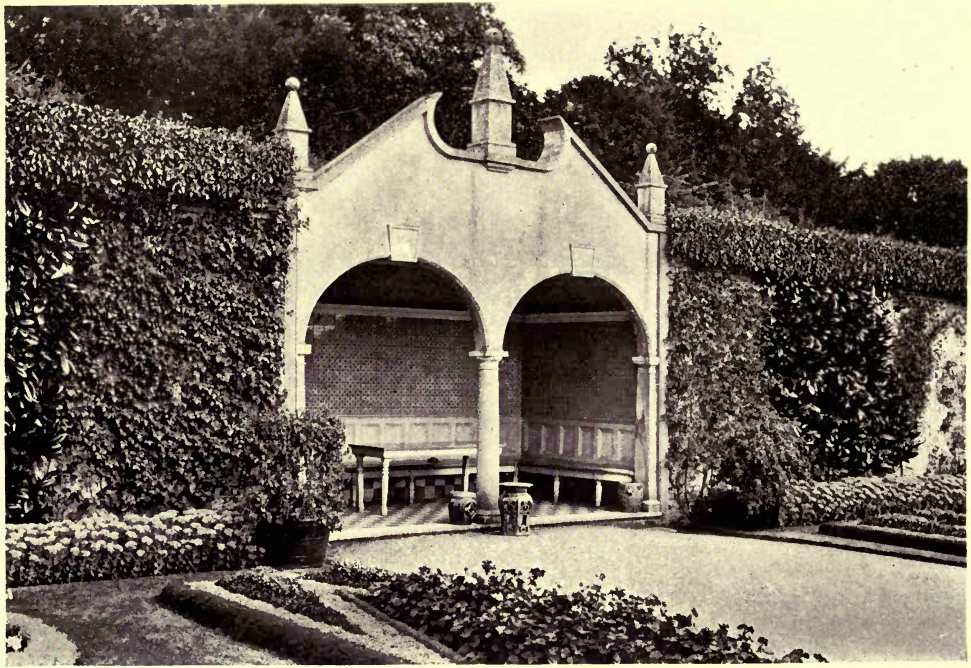
Where the house is required for a position near a lawn, or in an angle of the walls among the flower-borders, very good structures in rough carpentry may be formed with success. They may be made in a variety of shapes —square, octagonal, or to fit any particular angle at the junction of walls. The uprights should be formed of oak quartering, tarring the ends where they are embedded in the soil. The exterior may be formed of split oak fencing-pales, overlapping one another, with spaces left for open lattice windows if they are desired. A roof of reed thatch, or even tiles, will look well with this class of summer-house, and the interior may be fitted up as comfortably as possible. A brick floor is a great convenience and much more lasting than boards; though, if the latter

are used, they should be raised well above the level of the ground, and a small step provided at the entrance. I do not care for vanes on small summer-houses; they are more fitting ornaments to stable buildings, and look out of place among the trees and flowers of the garden. Windows are by no means desirable, as they only serve to exclude fresh air, and often make the interior unbearably hot. Light wooden shutters are sometimes convenient, and they are useful to put up in wet weather, so as to prevent the rain from driving in. Though it is very essential that direct sunshine be excluded from the summer-house, it should be remembered that a light, airy interior is of all things desirable; the damp, earthy smell which often permeates these structures is mainly due to lack of fresh air. Besides, darkness and dirt are synonymous terms, and the summer-house will generally be festooned with cobwebs if there is only a narrow doorway for admitting light and air. When the house is not built against a wall, a small opening may be made in the back, sufficient to allow of a through current of air. If there is a good view, a light lattice would enable it to be enjoyed, otherwise it might be well to fit a solid wooden shutter, which would make the place somewhat less draughty on days inclined to be chilly, or towards evening. These houses of plain carpentry should not be painted; if constructed of the split oak as recommended, they look far better in the natural colour of the wood. Match-boarding makes a very inartistic lining, but it is sometimes unavoidable, in which case it should be hung over with matting. The addition of a small verandah is often advisable to houses of considerable size, and, when overgrown with roses and creepers, it is often extremely picturesque. However, this feature should be so arranged that it does not exclude air and light from the interior, as is nearly always the case when it is attached to a dwelling-house.

In remote portions of the grounds, even so simple a structure as the foregoing would be out of place, and a light shelter formed of larch poles would be quite sufficient. Naturally it would not be very durable, but it would not be used frequently, serving merely as a temporary resting-place, or a handy retreat during occasional showers. As a rule the summer-houses made in imitation of foreign buildings are not a success, though the little Swiss châlets one sometimes sees make very good tea-houses. An example exists at Shrubland, but this contains several rooms, and being made in two stories, with balconies and stairways, is only suited for quite large gardens. At Sandringham one of the summer-houses is of lattice-work, with a roof shaped like those on Indian temples; but, however small and unpretentious these styles, they are rarely happy in English gardens, where our own styles of architecture are the best which can be adopted.

As I have mentioned previously, not the least valued use to which summer-houses lend themselves, is that of affording support to decorative climbers, which often look their best when associated with well-built structures of good and artistic design. Too often the summer-house is completely embowered in ivy, which, besides being employed far too freely in our gardens, is sure to bring insects and dirt along with it. Flowering shrubs and flowering climbers have been far too much neglected hitherto, and the heavy-looking masses of evergreens which are found everywhere in such profusion, are really crowding out a number of plants, which are far more graceful, as well as being varied in colour and habit. First, on account of their acknowledged supremacy in the garden, come the roses, in every shade and with a diversity of habit which fits them for a great variety of situations. In southern counties, good use may be made of the climbing Teas, which last in bloom for a long

time, and may be had in immense variety. The bright-leaved Banksian will also succeed in sheltered spots, and form garlands and festoons of exquisite beauty over bark and thatch. Even the common Dog Rose is not to be despised; in fact, any good florist will be able to recommend dozens of free-growing varieties which are well suited for rambling over the summer-house or arbour. The Clematis, or Virgin's Bower, is another beautiful plant for the purpose, and the purple forms look especially well when associated with the soft grey of unpainted oak. *C. montana*, with its myriad white blossoms, is useful, and in the wild garden the Traveller's Joy (*Vitalba*) will speedily clothe the building with its graceful foliage. Vines, Hops, Jasmine, Honeysuckle, and Wistaria all look well, the latter especially so, though of course it is not so good for immediate effect as many others. Arbours are sometimes constructed out of living trees, which, by judicious pruning, in time become really serviceable shelters for use during the hottest parts of the day. Skeleton erections of larch poles, with a shingle roof, also serve in situations where a properly built summer-house would neither be convenient nor suitable. They may be covered with creepers and furnished with seats, and soon become picturesque, if somewhat unsubstantial structures. Simplicity is of all things to be desired in connection with isolated buildings, in the garden which is planned on merely normal lines, and does not present any architectural features of importance. The main point to be avoided is the introduction of ready-made summer-houses of meretricious design, which have been made to a stock pattern, and are not in the least calculated to suit one garden out of a hundred. A handy carpenter, with such assistance as the owner could give, would have no difficulty in making any but the more elaborate forms, and the advantage of purchasing sound materials first-hand has



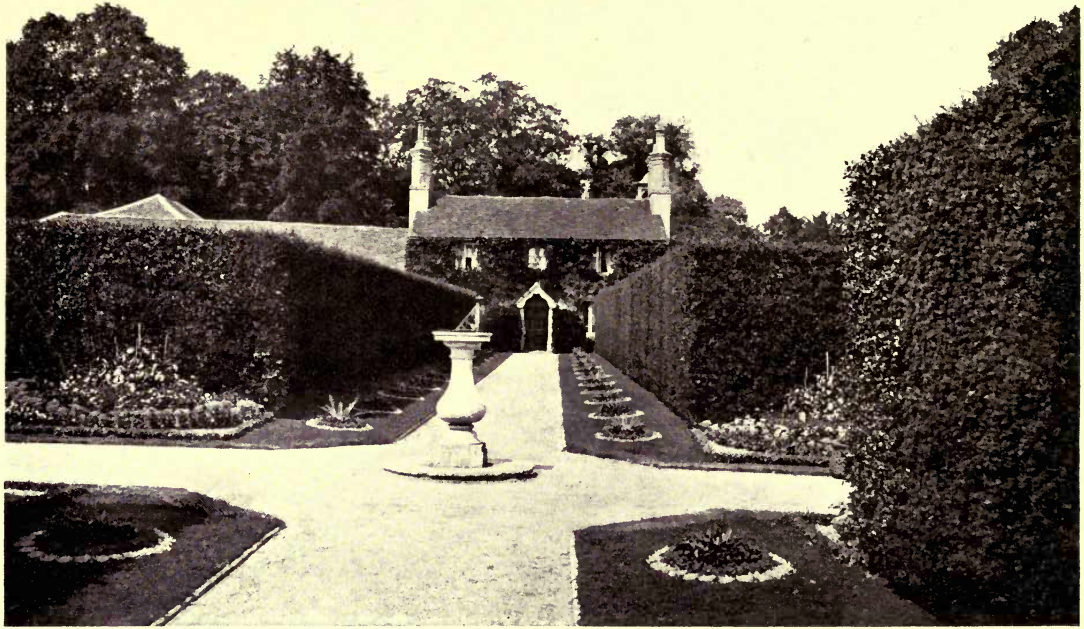
GARDEN HOUSE AT DOGMERSFIELD PARK, HANTS

much to commend it. Besides, comfort, which it is hopeless to look for in the manufactured article, may be aimed at in the home-made structure, and a degree of strength and solidity attained which will make the latter outlast the former by many years. Let us hope that before long we shall have seen the last of the varnished monstrosities, which have come to be associated with the work of the jerry-builder and others of his class.

CHAPTER IV

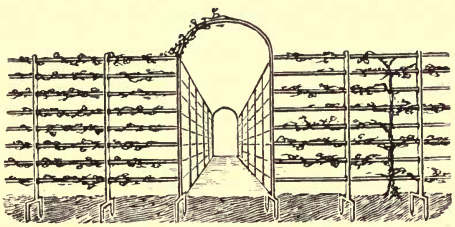
ARCHWAYS AND TREILLAGE

THERE are few better means of increasing the interest and charm of the garden, than by the judicious inclusion of the class of furniture with which we are now concerned. Indeed, it may be questioned whether there exists a cheaper or more satisfactory way of beautifying flat and somewhat monotonous stretches of garden scene, than by the free use of roses and other climbers displayed on arches or trellis-work. It does not require large or even moderate-sized grounds to render their use permissible ; for, subject to certain modifications, they may be erected in the smallest gardens, either in town or country. The primary object of both archway and trellis is to serve as a support for a great variety of plants of scandent habit, and this fact must not be lost sight of when erecting the skeleton framework. The construction should always be such that the plants shall be able, not only to be trained easily over or across, but also that they may be enabled to display their peculiar growth and beauty to the fullest advantage. Therefore, before deciding on any particular design, it is necessary to determine exactly what plants we are going to employ to cover it. A style of treillage which would be admirably suited for the rose garden, might prove ill adapted as a support for close-growing creepers of tender habit, and *vice versâ*. It is a mistake to suppose that arches or lattice-work must be of necessity ugly, and that there is really no reason why they should



GARDENER'S COTTAGE AND SUNDIAL IN DOGMERSFIELD GARDEN

be otherwise, simply because they are only the foundation for the real beauty of the structure. Considerable time must of necessity elapse before the framework is covered with living plants, and it would indeed be regrettable if the garden were disfigured even for a limited period. Fortunately no such necessity exists, for by closing our eyes once more to the blandishments of the ironmonger and the manufacturer of "rustic" furniture, and seeking simpler and more artistic designs, the supports may be good to look upon from the very first. Besides, except



ESPALIER FENCE.

in certain cases, it is not desirable to clothe the arch or trellis with a dense mass of foliage; far better effects are generally obtained by lightly veiling and softening its outline, allowing each branch and shoot ample room to develop properly. This makes it all the more necessary that the wood or ironwork (which, after all, will be only partially hidden) shall be capable of adding to the general good effect, rather than tending to detract from it by an ugly or commonplace appearance.

The garden arches which we meet with in illustrated catalogues are of two kinds, both being objectionable. First, there is the galvanised iron arch, an ugly, top-heavy arrangement, which can only be kept perpendicular by staying it with wires attached to stakes driven into the ground. How many times have I tripped over those

wires, almost invisible in the dusk! Rather worse than the iron arch, because more prominent, is that made of green painted trellis, or the still more trying arrangement of contorted branchings brilliantly varnished. Our resources must indeed be limited if we cannot contrive something better and more appropriate than either of these, and usually at a fraction of the cost. Rough pieces of suitable wood are to be found in plenty at any timber yard; or, if iron is to enter into the construction of the proposed arch, the aid of the nearest blacksmith should be requisitioned. With regard to the latter material, however, it is well to bear in mind that many plants, roses especially, seldom do well when trained against it. For this reason, where the extra strength and durability of iron render its use desirable, it would be well to surround it with a light wooden framework. In the kitchen garden, the espaliers running parallel along the two sides of a main walk, might be arched over, either continuously or at regular intervals, in this case iron arches being employed.

A fault, nearly always noticeable in ready-made garden arches, is that they are seldom built of sufficient depth, and where free-growing climbers are to be grown, this is a great disadvantage. The framework for a rose arch should not be less than two feet deep, three would not be too much in the majority of cases. The better effect obtained by spreading out the main shoots, instead of having them crowded together with little or no space to develop, is quite sufficient to warrant the slightly increased cost of materials for the larger framework. A very good form of archway may be built with half a dozen rods an inch square, and a number of three-foot lengths of lighter wood. Four of the rods are used as uprights, bedding them securely in the ground, two and a half feet apart, on each side of the walk it is desired to span. The uprights are joined overhead by the two remaining rods, and the

small cross-pieces are nailed on horizontally up the sides and over the top. The larger rods should be firmly secured together with screws, and the ends which are bedded in the soil should be creosoted. Such an arch would be excellent for covering with roses, but would hardly prove so suited for clematis, honeysuckle, or climbers of more slender habit. For these the iron arch, just a single rod bent into the required shape, will often prove quite sufficient, but a couple of struts would be required on either side to keep the arch upright. In exposed situations, iron arches seldom prove satisfactory, for when weighted with a burden of foliage, they are very liable to be blown in all directions with the first high wind. Occasionally, good use may be made of large sized branches to construct a simple form of rustic arch. I have seen picturesque specimens constructed so that the top projects for some distance over the uprights on either side. The wooden gate arches before the wayside temples in Japan are good models to copy, of course without the carved outline which many of these display. Where tree branches are employed, on no account should they be covered with twigs, pieces of bark, and other rustic adornments; the simpler they are the better, the great point to aim at being a good outline, not clumsy in shape. Larch poles fastened securely together make good arches, in fact, any durable wood may be pressed into service; with a saw, hammer, and a few nails, the amateur will not find the least difficulty in constructing these, the simplest forms of garden furniture.

The positions for arches in the garden are practically limited to the sides of walks, and it is only very rarely indeed that an arch looks well when placed so that it cannot be walked under. Arches standing on isolated spots on the lawn look supremely ridiculous, yet this is often done to the utter defiance of all laws of reason and good taste. A succession of arches cut in a well-grown yew

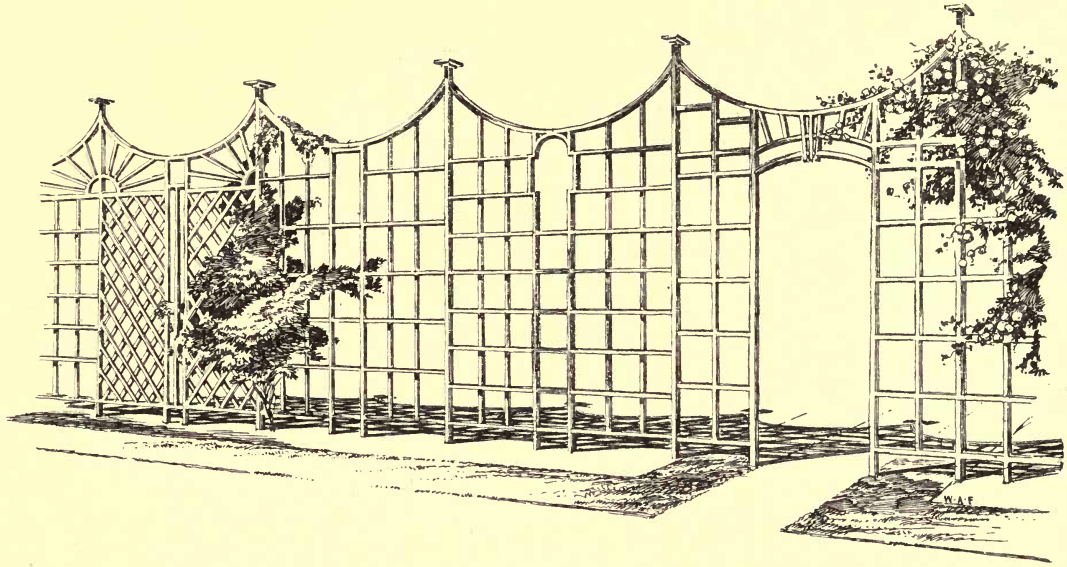
hedge look charming, giving a cloistered effect, and allowing a series of beautiful views, each seen through a dark green frame of close-clipped branches. Towards evening too, a delightful effect is obtained by the shadows which the arched hedge throws across the grass or pathway. In making such hedges, it is often advisable to use a light wooden framework to assist the branches to keep in position. One great disadvantage attends these arches formed in close-growing hedges, that of creating draughty corners, where formerly warmth and shelter existed. However, the opening up of a good view, or the breaking of the monotony caused by a dense mass of sombre foliage, is often sufficient compensation for any possible difficulties experienced in growing tender flowers in the vicinity. It is often possible to spoil the effect of a good walk by placing an arch in mid-distance, so that the perspective is completely lost. For this reason, care should be taken to ascertain that the archway is likely to be of some value before including it in the garden at all. The junction of two or more paths at a sharp angle is generally a safe place for a light arch, or even a couple crossing one another, forming when covered, a bower of climbing plants. Another suitable position is the boundary line between the flower and kitchen gardens, the arch marking the transition from one to the other. Arches may often be employed in positions which would look well covered by a pergola, but where the added cost of such a structure is not thought expedient. After all, a row of arches, placed fairly near together, gives, if viewed from the end, much the effect of a continuous alley of greenery. The use of the latter also allows much more light and air to circulate, and where shade is not a necessity, answers very well. To pass through an arch seems to suggest something new in the garden, a fresh departure in the design, the leaving behind of former associations and

the entering on of new. Where the arch is placed in the centre of a walk, this pleasurable anticipation is absent, and there is a lack of motive displayed which cannot fail to destroy an effect which is otherwise satisfactory enough. Very often the galvanised iron wire erections, which I have referred to earlier, are fixed to the brickwork surrounding a doorway in the garden wall. This seems to me one of the poorest uses to which the arch can be put, as there is one existing already, and the bareness of the wall could easily have been masked by creepers. By carefully avoiding the use of the cheap ready-made forms which are so much advertised, using instead a simple framework of durable materials, there only remains the necessity for choosing an appropriate position, and the garden arch is an assured success.

Comparatively few of our modern gardeners seem to have any idea of the charming and varied effects which can be obtained, at small cost, by the use of trellis-work. Especially does this apply to owners of small gardens, which latter often demand its introduction more than those of large extent. Small villa gardens for example would often be vastly improved by screening off unsightly objects, which obtrude their presence forcibly upon us, and which, owing to the limited space, always seem to be part of the view, no matter from which direction one looks. The cheap wooden lattice, which may be purchased at so much the foot run, is chiefly used for facing walls to afford a foothold for climbers, and only occasionally is it employed in isolated positions. In drawing attention to other forms of treillage, and suggesting sites where it may be placed with advantage, I can strongly commend the designs executed by Mr. White of Bedford, to the notice of those who wish for artistic styles carried out in durable materials. After having been for so long accustomed to ugly and

commonplace garden furniture of all descriptions, it is refreshing to find that a high standard of excellence has been aimed at, and attained by, this well-known firm. Trellis-work may be made so ornamental in itself, and capable of adding so materially to the interest of the garden, that it is by no means necessary or desirable to cover it completely with creepers. In fact, the general result of so doing is to create a heavy mass of uninteresting foliage, often in places where a light and graceful effect would be far preferable. Wire trellis often looks well in the rose garden, but the mesh should be large and the openings in squares rather than diamonds. It should be fixed to posts erected at intervals; or sometimes iron rods with slightly ornamented tops form good supports. The trellis should on no account run straight along the top, but should be scalloped between each pair of posts, or terminated in some way so as to create a light and finished appearance. Openings can be made so that distant views can be opened up, but far better that the rose garden should be a place of itself, where other flowers seek in vain for admittance, and the high lattice with its covering of climbers shuts out the rest of the garden completely. I suggest the wire trellis for roses, as it is so inconspicuous and allows the blossoms to show themselves to fullest advantage, whilst detracting nothing from their beauty. For the majority of situations, however, that in wood will answer best, and in this material there is absolutely no limit to the designs which may be prepared by any one gifted with the use of a pencil and some knowledge of the principles involved.

The illustration shows four styles of simple trellis-work, chiefly suitable for climbers of robust and extended habit. For small, fine-growing plants, closer lattice is necessary, that on the left of the drawing being suitable. This trellis may be constructed either of deal or oak, both stained Carbolineum, the latter wood costing twice as



FOUR STYLES OF TRELLIS-WORK.

much as the former. A form of trellis fence which looks well, is constructed of closely interlaced laths in the lower portion, gradually increasing the size of the spaces until they are a foot or so across at the top. The trellis should always be divided into sections, with posts at intervals, as this relieves the appearance of monotony, which exists when one design is repeated for long without a break. By using flexible laths, semi-circular openings may be made, so as to enable a peep to be obtained of the lawn or garden behind. These miniature views framed in greenery are always pleasing, and, to strangers especially, afford a charming means of first becoming acquainted with the beauties beyond.

Beside fences, there are other ways of employing trellis-work to advantage. In the construction of arbours, gateways, and other features where a quick effect is desired, treillage is invaluable. However, it should never be adopted simply as a means of showing elaborate specimens of the turner's and joiner's skill; our climate will not treat ornamental outdoor woodwork kindly enough for that, however desirable it might be. As it is to support climbers, especial care should be taken that the laths are so arranged that they give adequate support; close enough to permit of the small shoots being secured, and yet without any superfluous wood to add needlessly to the cost of construction. The rustic trellis, built of larch or oak poles secured to stakes, is more suited to the wilder parts of the garden, though treillage is there but little needed. Except on a very small scale, it is usually cheaper to buy the wrought wooden designs from a good manufacturer, rather than attempt to construct an often flimsy and clumsy-looking erection of rough materials. In the kitchen garden, for training fruit trees, espalier trellis is much the best, and this can be procured in a plain, neat design in cast-iron rods. For affording

shelter, shade, and seclusion, and giving an air of space and mystery to the garden scene, treillage is of the greatest value; and when, in addition to being merely useful, it is of itself distinctly ornamental, good ground exists for its free employment.

CHAPTER V

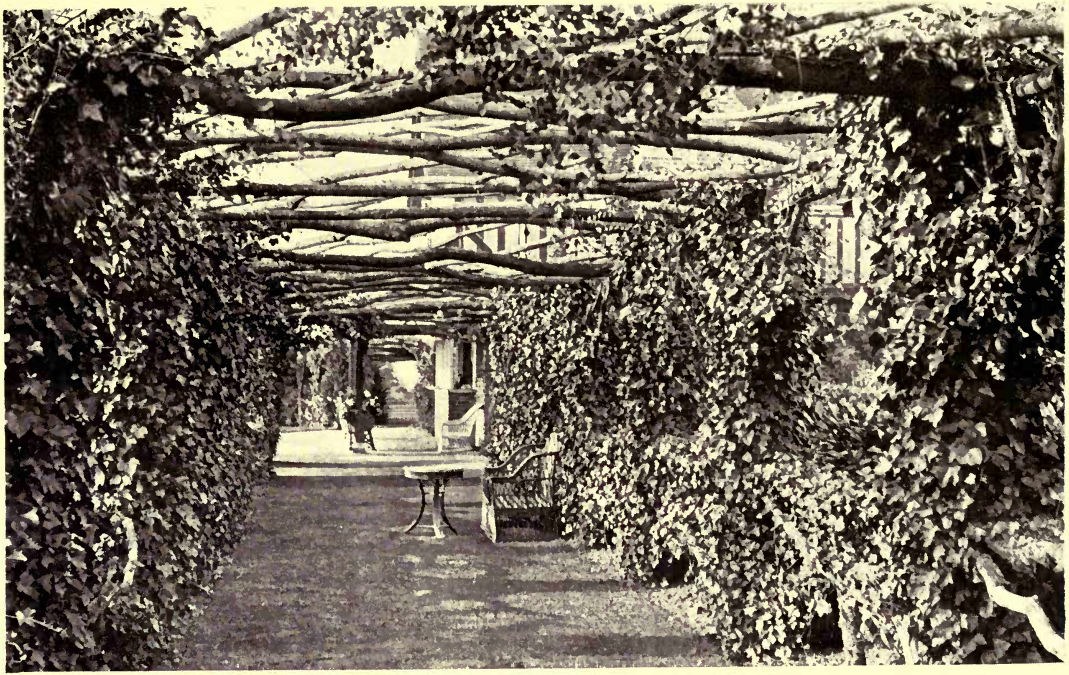
PERGOLAS

PATHWAYS covered with greenery have always been a much-sought-after feature in gardens of all times, not only on account of their decidedly ornamental appearance, but more especially for the shelter and shade which they afford. In Elizabethan gardens, the old-fashioned plashed alley was frequently seen, and both this and the quaint bower walks are still occasionally met with in old gardens. Neither of these methods of obtaining sheltered walks are much practised nowadays, and in modern gardens the pergola takes their place. The latter, which consists of a series of stone, brick, or wooden pillars, supporting a lattice framework, and extending over the pathway as far as desired, is at once a simple and beautiful means of securing support for climbers, and giving interest and variety to the garden.

Italy is the home of the pergola, and it is in that country that the most beautiful effects are obtained by its use. In the gardens of the great villas, such as are to be seen near Rome and Florence, the pergola is an extremely important and ornate structure. Constructed almost entirely of stone, with massive supporting columns wreathed in gorgeous climbers, and stone benches placed at intervals, the pergola is of sufficient size to act as an open-air reception-room on hot days. Often it terminates in a garden-house of imposing and stately design, and the effect of these corridors of cool stone, relieved by brilliant

climbers, clematis, passion-flowers, and roses of every hue, is supremely beautiful. Of course, in a climate like ours, such a structure would be thoroughly out of place for nine months of the year, and would look cold and cheerless to a degree in winter time. But all Italian pergolas are not so pretentious, and the smallest villas, or even the gardens of the poor, generally have a rough framework over which the vines ramble and cluster, and the family sit and smoke when the day's work is done. As a rule, even the smallest of these pergolas has supporting pillars of rough stone; but the material is cheap and easily obtained, and the Italian is an adept at working it in the rough and ready way which looks so effective. Continental gardeners also use the pergola to advantage, especially when there is little attempt at elaborate erections, which are seldom desirable except in warm countries.

In the majority of English gardens, quite rustic forms will prove far the most satisfactory, for the good reason that the style of gardening which is most admired to-day, is that in which there is absolute freedom from artificiality. The carpenter or stonemason should not be allowed to obtrude his work more than absolutely necessary, for in the garden we expect to see much of nature and but little of the craftsman, who has plenty of other places in which to display his skill. It must not be thought, however, that I do not advocate those more solidly built structures, which are of necessity the joint work of a practised designer and a good builder—these are often the best pergolas of all; but the architect must be a man who knows his business, combining a special knowledge of the garden and its requirements with that more directly pertaining to his profession. A flimsy framework of thin poles roughly fixed together is, to my mind, almost as bad as an over-massive structure; solidity and strength without clumsiness, being absolutely essential



PERGOLA AT MR. SPENCER CHARRINGTON'S

if a good effect is to be obtained. I will now give a few suggestions as to the construction of pergolas, before referring to the positions they should occupy, and the plants which may be employed for covering them.

A pergola of rough carpentry may be built of almost any wood, but unless that of a really durable nature can be afforded, it will be far better to dispense with the feature altogether. I have seen thin deal splines used for constructing quite a large pergola, and I have also seen the decay which soon began to weaken the structure, rendering it necessary for the rotten laths to be continually replaced, to the infinite detriment of the climbers. There can be no satisfaction in spending time and money over a pergola which cannot, at the best, last more than a few years, and it is humiliating to be obliged to continually warn our friends against leaning against the woodwork, lest it collapse under the strain.

Stone is undoubtedly the best material for the upright posts, as it looks well and lasts practically for ever. In the north of England, very good supports may be procured of green stone, similar to those which are employed for gate-posts. In Devon and Cornwall, also, there would be no difficulty in obtaining good material for the purpose; in most other counties brick or wood must be used. The stone pillars rarely need to be dressed in any way; they look far better if left in the rough, and it matters little if they are round, square, or twisted, as long as they are about ten feet in height, and not more than a foot through. The uprights should be sunk firmly, preferably in a bed of concrete, in pairs along the sides of the pathway, at a distance of eight feet apart each way. This will make the section of the pergola a perfect square; if this is objected to, higher posts should be used, but they should not be placed closer together. It is the fault of far too many pergolas that they are much too narrow, and it must be remembered that when the climbers have grown,

there will be considerably less width than when there is only the bare framework. Besides, we want our shaded walk to be free and airy, and not a mere tunnel of greenery, obstructing the light and making it difficult for more than one person to pass through at a time. Stout wooden cross-pieces should connect each pair of posts; if the latter are allowed to project a foot either way, they will break the straight line which would otherwise mar the appearance of the pergola when viewed from the end. After securing the cross-pieces, connect the tops of the pillars in the lines with similar woodwork: this being done, the strong outer frame is complete. The wood for cross-beams may consist of slender oak branches; if stout, they should be split in two. Where sawn and carpentered work is preferred, four-inch quartering may be substituted. In this case, the lattice should also be in keeping, but where untrimmed oak is employed, thin larch poles would answer well.

Some builders prefer not to fill in the lattice until the creepers have become established and need the extra support, arguing that the additional woodwork is unsightly until there is some relief afforded. This is certainly true, but against it must be weighed the possible damage to tender shoots, which any but a very careful workman would be likely to cause when nailing on the lattice. If well designed, the pergola need not be in the least an eyesore, especially if it is not placed in an unduly prominent position. The number of cross poles, fixed to the top and sides, can be varied according to the style of plants it is determined to employ as a covering, but it is a mistake to crowd on any more wood than is absolutely necessary. As I have said, light as well as shade is desirable, and occasional gleams of sunshine filtering through the branches always add to the beauty and charm of our rustic pergola. Where rough stone for the pillars is not obtainable, stout oak posts, with the bark attached, would

form a good substitute ; squared posts may also be used, but these would look decidedly formal, and would savour overmuch of the carpenter.

Where brick is employed, though this is rarely successful unless the pergola is in sight of the house or connected with mural work, preference might be given to the large, rough bricks often used for walls on outlying parts of the property. They are considerably more artistic than the ordinary builders' bricks, and have the additional advantage of being very much cheaper. Red bricks should not be used in the construction of a pergola, as there are few climbers which harmonise at all well with them, and the colour is opposed to all idea of coolness, which is so important a consideration with this particular structure. In pergolas of some size, it is occasionally desirable to form recesses down the sides, in which a garden seat or simple bench may be placed ; this helps to relieve the straightness of the outer walls, and at the same time preserves the inside vista from being broken. Ornamental pillars are both undesirable and unnecessary, except where the pergola is constructed over a terrace walk, with an ornamental balustrading running the whole of its length. Any attempt at rusticity would here be quite out of place, and the structure of the pergola must closely follow the lines of the architectural design of which it is to form a part. Such pergolas, however, are rarely heavily clothed with plants, and are employed more for their handsome appearance, than as a support for climbers.

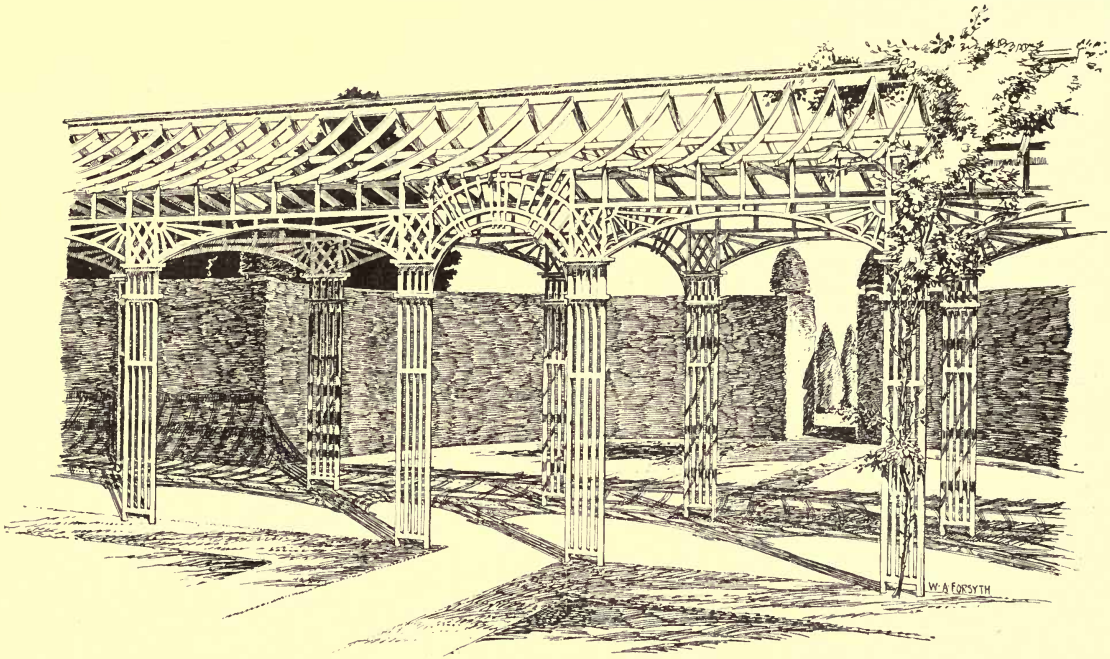
In more or less isolated parts of the grounds, where there is no need to emphasise the pergola too strongly, good use may be made of larch poles for constructing quite simple designs. The stoutest poles should be used for uprights, and to ensure rigidity, sunk a couple of feet into the ground. They would last much longer if they were surrounded in the soil with cement grouting, which would prevent the damp from undermining their

strength. Ten feet apart would be a good distance from post to post, though the pergola itself would not need to be more than eight feet in width. The cross-bars and lattice may be secured, either with nails or stout wire, the latter being perhaps preferable in light rustic structures, as the wood is not split or damaged. Iron is somewhat largely used in the construction of pergolas by some designers, but it has little picturesque value, and the objection which many plants have to it, proves an obstacle which can only be overcome by sheathing it with wooden lattice.

A paved walk is a great improvement where it can be managed, but cement is a bad substitute, and the best effect is obtained by the use of good-sized flags, placed somewhat unevenly. These can sometimes be picked up cheaply when slightly damaged, and can be set without much trouble, even by the novice. In wet weather, and especially when the pergola forms the means of communication between the residence and a summer or garden house, the advantages of a paved walk will be apparent. The demolition of old buildings, stabling, barns, and outhouses, often gives an opportunity for the purchase of old oak beams, rafters, etc., which are excellent materials for the woodwork. The wood looks all the better for being dirty and discoloured, and having been kept from the influence of weather, it is as sound as can be desired. Twigs and branches are, of course, totally unnecessary for the further decoration of the finished structure; they only serve to detract from its appearance, and are in no way useful for assisting the growth of climbers.

The illustration of a trellis pergola, which is one of Mr. White's designs, is exceedingly graceful and appropriate; it is provided with an arched, instead of a flat, roof. Naturally this gives a much lighter appearance, and the idea may easily be carried out in the rougher

PERGOLA IN LADY DORCHESTER'S GARDEN, NEAR WINCHFIELD



A TRELLIS PERGOLA.

styles with which I have been dealing. However, in many cases the square shape is the more appropriate, and helps to make the pergola a distinct feature from the series of arches which sometimes take its place. Few garden structures present less difficulty in the way of construction than the pergola; indeed, the great point is to avoid over-elaboration. Simplicity and a certain degree of solidity are the main points to be considered, and the amateur who undertakes the building himself, or commissions another to do it for him, should see that they are faithfully carried out.

With ordinary care and the exercise of taste, the erection of the pergola is easy enough, but apparently it is a more difficult matter to place it in a suitable position. At least this is the conclusion one arrives at, after seeing a number of pergolas situated so that much of their beauty and *raison d'être* is entirely lost. A great number of gardens contain absolutely no spot where a pergola is needful or desirable, and these are the very places where we generally find that misdirected enthusiasm has been responsible for an eyesore. Of all unlikely places, the centre of a lawn would seem the last, yet such positions are frequently enough occupied by a pergola, often built of massive stone or cumbrous brickwork. Clothed with the choicest plants, and faultless in construction, they can never be satisfactory in such spots, simply because the real reason for their existence is here entirely absent. A pergola should serve as a walk leading from one place to another, and the way to fully appreciate their beauty is to view them from the inside, not the outside. One would hardly think of walking down the centre of the grass plot, when there were paths surrounding it, and thus only one side of the pergola is visible at a time. If placed over a walk in frequent use, we see not only the vista from end to end, but we obtain as well charming peeps of the garden scene, framed

between the pillars, with their fringe of flowers and foliage. I have seen many pergolas placed in positions as meaningless and more so than the above, and I do not wonder that many who see them for the first time are somewhat doubtful as to the reason for their introduction into our gardens at all.

Having quite determined that the pergola must cross some frequented walk, care should be taken that it is one which will look well bridged over in the fashion we propose. I have known instances in which the erection of a pergola has completely shut out one of the best views in the garden—this is a danger to guard against. In small, narrow gardens our aim should be to compensate for the absence of breadth, by giving an impression of as great length as possible, therefore we must beware of shortening it by the erection of a heavy screen of greenery right across. In other ways, the gardener with grounds of limited extent will need to exercise care in the choice of a suitable site, and also that the size of the pergola is proportionate to the surrounding objects. The pergola is of great value for marking the boundary line between two distinct portions of the garden, usually the lawns and highly cultivated parts, and the wilder section leading maybe to the orchard or fields beyond. The transition from one to the other is usually ill defined, and an appearance of neglect is observable. A short pergola would prepare us for a change of scene, and the judicious planting of shrubs would act as a further screen. It is on these short walks, joining two different styles of planting and arrangement, that the pergola is most useful; in fact, it serves in the garden much as does a short passage between two separate portions of the house.

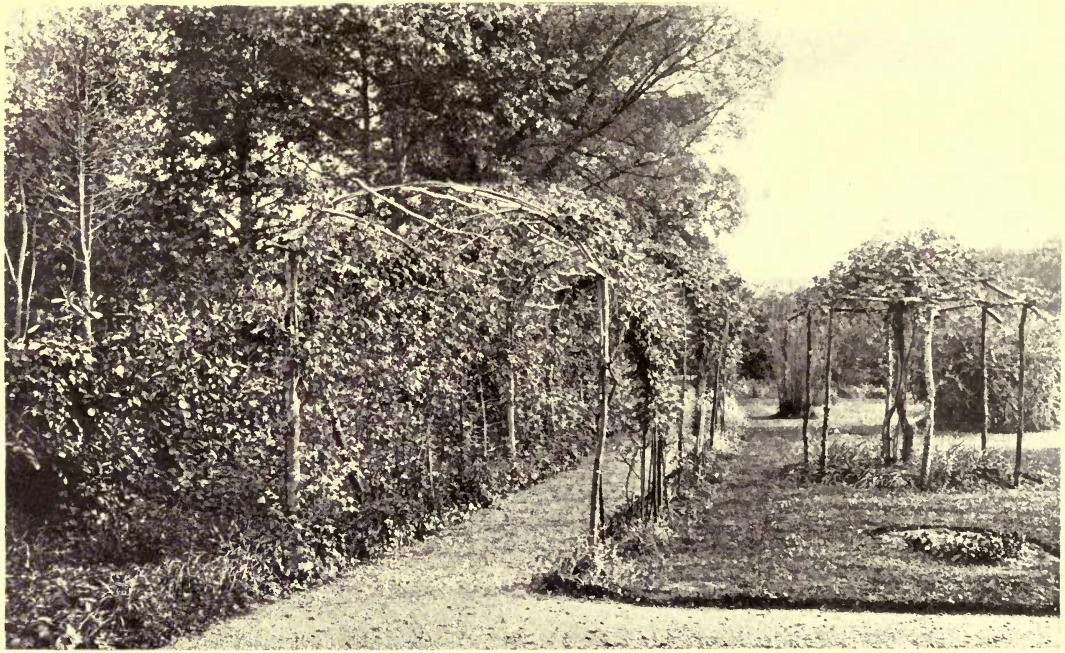
Another good position would be along the edge of a tennis or croquet ground. The shade and shelter would be most welcome to spectators of the game, and the

climbers could be so trained that they impeded the view but little. The summer or garden house, if such exist, being much used in hot weather, and frequent passage between it and the house being necessary, a shaded path-way communicating from one to the other would be in the best possible taste. Pergolas are very frequently built so that they run parallel with a wall, which forms one of the sides. These are seldom satisfactory, being, except at a certain portion of the day, dull and cheerless, and naturally one misses the extra display of foliage, and the effect of light and shade. The worst position is the centre of a path, which neither serves as a boundary between two garden divisions, nor as a direct communication to some new feature. Though it is desirable that the pergola should not be placed so that it is the most conspicuous object in a flat stretch of scene, care should be taken that it is not surrounded by trees with hungry roots. These would speedily be attracted towards the good soil in which the climbers were growing, and the latter would certainly be deprived of much nourishment by their rapacious neighbours.

A charming approach may be made to the rose garden by means of a short pergola, covered by the beautiful climbing varieties of the queen of flowers; in suitable positions, two sections of the arched walk might be joined by an arbour provided with comfortable seats and a table. However, I do not care for too many pergolas: in some cases I have seen as many as four radiating from a domed arbour or similar erection. It is a mistake to repeat the same idea so that it becomes monotonous; variety should be aimed at in all good gardens, and there are few large enough to include all the many beautiful effects which are capable of affording so much pleasure. Even in the kitchen garden, a good pergola would prove a valuable acquisition: in this case, utility being demanded, the structure could be covered with fruit trees. Seeing how

cheaply it may be constructed and how adaptable it is to a variety of gardens, the pergola deserves to become as popular in England as it is in sunny Italy, the home of flowers, and the garden of the world.

A list of climbers suitable for covering the pergola would occupy many pages, and it would be out of place in this little book to devote much space to a discussion of flowers and their culture, a phase of gardening which has received much attention at the hands of other writers. However, it so often happens that one sees poor and inferior plants monopolising space where beautiful forms would succeed, that I will just mention a few which we can ill afford to neglect. First and foremost come the roses—and here, according to the position of the pergola, we may grow numbers of beautiful varieties. Heading the list comes the gorgeous Crimson Rambler, with its vivid green foliage, and great blossom clusters, looking especially lovely when wreathing a grey stone pillar, or twisting among the oaken lattice—a true gem for the pergola. Then there are its relatives Euphrosyne and Aglaia; the latter, however, is apt to prove disappointing as it flowers somewhat sparsely. *Rosa Brunonis*, sometimes difficult to obtain, is well worth the trouble of seeking after; it is a very free grower, the leaves glaucous, and the pure white blossoms, borne in panicles, are each centred with yellow stamens. Carmine Pillar, a beautiful single, must not be forgotten; and the same may be said of the creamy white Felicité Pepetue, and the white clustered Aimée Vibert. W. A. Richardson, Climbing Captain Christy, and *Polyantha Simplex* are among a host of others well adapted for the pergola. But it seems a sacrilege to specify a few out of dozens, which only want of space would prevent one including; the rose is beautiful in all its forms, but as a climber it is more than ever entitled to the proud position it occupies in the garden.



PERGOLA AT OTTERBOURNE, NEAR WINCHESTER

(HOME OF THE LATE MISS C. M. YONGE)

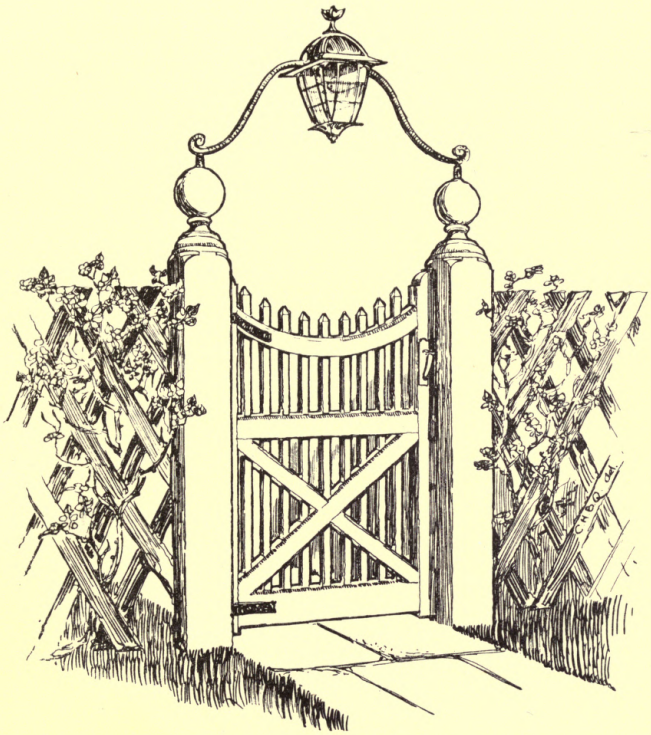
Among the Clematis there are few which would not prove an acquisition to the pergola, and both purple and white forms are equally desirable. The small-flowered *Montana* grows luxuriantly, but must be kept well in bounds, and should not be grown to the exclusion of others of the same family. *Jackmanii*, a rich purple, and the large flowered *Henryi*, should all find a place. Then there is Wistaria, especially the Japanese variety, which can only be seen to perfection in the Flowery Land itself, where its long, pendulous racimes form dense curtains of delicate colour. The yellow Jasmine will brighten the pergola during the winter months, whilst Honeysuckles and Vines will give perfume and shade during the summer. Where it can be made to grow—and that, alas, is not everywhere—the gorgeous Flame Flower (*Tropæolum speciosum*) will look very handsome on a stone pergola. I have tried again and again to make it succeed in various situations, but the freedom with which it rambles over the wayside cottages in the Lake district, always fills me with envy. So that the pergola shall not be bare in winter, a plant or two of Ivy may be encouraged, but it must be kept well in check, lest it smother the more delicate climbers. These are but a few, which should receive first consideration, others to supplement them will occur to all; whilst good use may be made of such quick-growing plants as *Calystegia* and the old-fashioned Nasturtium to garland the pergola, until the permanent climbers have become established.

CHAPTER VI

GATES, FENCES, AND EDGINGS

It is generally possible to estimate the style of garden we are about to enter, by a mere glance at the fence or wall which surrounds it, and the gate or door through which we gain admittance. Almost invariably like encloses like —the staring fence with ugly gates forms the boundary of a garden where artistic taste is conspicuous by its absence, and, on the other hand, the really beautiful garden is complete even to the girdle which separates it from the outer world. The work of the skilled designer does not stop short at the gate of the garden, but embraces this structure itself, and is not ended until another step would bring us to our neighbour's property. As a good picture may be spoilt by bad frame, so may a good garden be ruined by ugly boundary lines, and it cannot be said that the question of suitable gates and fences is either irrelevant or unimportant.

Entrance gateways, and those leading to stables, do not concern the garden architect, so that I shall only speak of the smaller posterns and wickets, which communicate from one part of the garden to another. Often these are plain and ugly to a degree, and being merely constructed of close-fitting boards, serve their purpose, but are in no way picturesque. The choice of an artistic design does not necessarily mean that its practical utility is sacrificed in the very least, and it is the manner in which the two are combined that proclaims the good or bad architect.



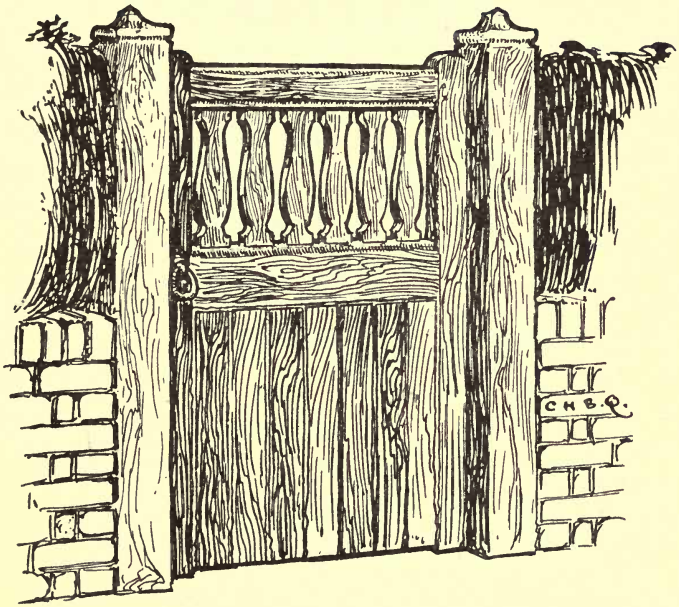
A SIMPLE ENTRANCE GATE.

The actual construction of gates will hardly come within the province of the amateur, unless he is exceptionally skilled in the use of tools, and has, moreover, a well-appointed workshop in which to fit together his materials. In the wilder parts of the garden, however, a gate is sometimes a necessity, and here he may try his hand with some prospect of success. Stiles, turn-wickets, and gates with drop-bars are but seldom introduced into gardens, and belong more to agriculture, where a simple means for excluding cattle, and yet allowing a free passage for pedestrians, is all that is needed.

Some of the most beautiful gates I have seen were constructed of wrought iron, the design being sufficiently elaborate without undue complexity. In every case these gates were used in connection with stone or brick walls, and were overarched with masonry. Wrought-iron gates are not in the least suitable for use with wooden fences, and they rarely look well near red brickwork; grey or white stone being the material with which they associate most readily. The best position for this style of gate is a deep arch in a stone wall, where the grille-like effect obtained by the black iron tracery is in perfect accord with the solidity and strength of the surrounding masonry. Such gates being purely ornamental—for they are rarely used on boundary walls—should, of course, only be adopted when the view looking through them either way is good. If the path runs from the flower to the kitchen garden, a solid door would be better, as in the majority of places the surroundings of the vegetable ground are not so picturesque as might be. A good design in wrought iron would come somewhat expensive, so that in gardens of small extent the wooden gate or door will be largely employed. In selecting a design, due consideration should be given to the importance, or otherwise, of the position it is to occupy. A simple wicket gate, as rustic as possible in appearance, would suffice for the division between

garden and orchard; but for the chief entrance, or where garden and park join, something more elaborate would be desirable and appropriate. For the latter position, one of the hooded gateways would look well, the hood being either of wood or of iron, with a lamp in the centre, if this were needed. In this case, the gate itself would look best if shaped so that when closed it formed with the hood a circular opening, through which a good vista could be obtained. Some manufacturers are fond of constructing designs with a raised top, but these are one of the worst forms which can be adopted, unless, of course, they are required to fit an arched doorway in a wall. Such gates can never be really strong, as they are opposed to all principles of balance, and the hinges are continually jamming or getting out of order. Heavy doorways, with ponderous hinges and studded with nails, are more suited for the entrance to prisons than gardens, and are costly to build.

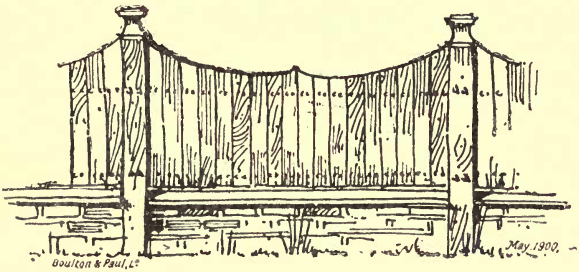
Generally speaking, a door should never be used when a gate might take its place, for the simple reason that the former cramps and confines, while the latter gives an idea of space and freedom. Doors are permissible when they communicate direct with a yard, or lead to a public road, and are therefore necessary to secure privacy. Rustic gates made of unpeeled larch are fairly suitable for informal parts of the grounds, but as they are generally left open, it is questionable whether they serve a very useful purpose. Often their place might be taken by a small stile, with the top bar made so that it can be removed without trouble. Occasionally, where it is thought undesirable to make a gap in wall or fence, steps are made to cross from one side to the other. These wooden erections are rarely picturesque, and are a terrible nuisance to climb; but if the wall is of rough stone, a few projecting steps made in the actual fabric are unobtrusive, though they require some skill to negotiate at all gracefully.



A GARDEN GATE.

The garden artist will attach much value to the design and material of his gates, knowing well that they often mark the most important spots in the whole garden. Certainly, those who have the laying out of new gardens, and are not handicapped by the errors of former occupiers, should give the matter more than passing notice.

Nearly every country has its particular style of fencing, and in Japan, the home of dainty craftsmanship and exquisite taste in matters horticultural, they are most



DESIGN FOR FENCE.

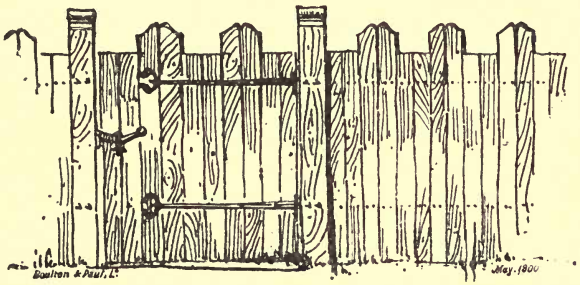
particular that their tiny palings and boundary walls are in perfect accord with the gardens which they enclose. The garden fence into whose construction barbed wire, broken bottles, and tarred boards largely enter, cannot be otherwise than an eyesore, and however desirable it may be to exclude our neighbours' cats, or even our neighbours themselves, these unclimbable fences should not be allowed anywhere in sight. A single strand of barbed wire is quite sufficient to create a note of discord, in a place where beauty and rest are supposed to be the dominant features. Iron and wire fences have done much to ruin the appearance of many English gardens, not that they are used so much in the garden itself, but because they obtrude their presence into the meadow and

woodland, on the distant view of which the interest of so many places depends. The most beautiful fence for the English landscape is the old-fashioned post and rail, made of good oak. It is both strong and durable, and carries that air of solidity and worth which we look for in vain in the cheap-looking iron erection, which is completely out of harmony with its surroundings. Unfortunately, in these days of agricultural depression, artistic effect must perforce give way to economy and efficiency, but it is sad that our gardens should so often be marred, not made, by their surroundings of open country.

In gardens of considerable size, which are surrounded by a park, the owners have a far greater choice in the styles of fencing they may adopt than those who have to secure privacy, owing to the immediate proximity of their neighbours. In the former case, the fence will necessarily be somewhat inconspicuous, so that the distant view will not be interfered with in any way. A light form of terrace balustrading would look well, if the garden already contained similar features ; if not, a low stone wall, with pillars at intervals, would be appropriate, especially when covered with climbing plants. Some designers would no doubt prefer to use the sunk or ha-ha fence, but I rarely see an example of this which appears satisfactory. The garden bounded by it always has an unfinished appearance, the eye has nothing to restrain it, but wanders aimlessly round, and the lawns and flowers are lost amid the broad surroundings of the landscape beyond. Besides, at a distance, the contrast in the appearance of the grass on either side of the fence looks unreasonable, and there is a general air of insecurity and lack of concentrating interest, which would soon disappear were a low visible fence erected as a well-marked boundary.

The best style of fencing for small gardens is that in split oak, of which there are a great variety of styles and methods of building. The simplest is entirely without

ornament, and consists merely of a number of battens of suitable length, overlapping a framework of uprights and rails. However, this is one of the best fences which can be used, as the colour of the weathered oak forms an excellent contrast to any climbers which may be attached to it, and, so far as wood goes, it is durability itself. Slightly more ornate is the same fence, with stout posts with slightly decorated heads, placed at intervals. Another good form consists of a close fencing of battens at the bottom, terminated by an open lattice at such a height as may be desired. Where the fence is merely required to



WICKET AND FENCE.

serve a temporary purpose until a hedge has grown, a combination of oak and wire would prove effective. Posts placed at intervals, with a top rail of oak and three or four lines of strained wire beneath, would answer, and it might be removed when the hedge had grown sufficiently. Every one knows the charming rustic fences of peeled larch arranged in lattice-work, which look so well half-covered with roses in small cottage gardens. They can be made by any carpenter, and in informal parts look very well, but are of course useless in villa or suburban gardens. A variation of the rustic lattice is

made with strong laths secured to stout posts and a top rail, the whole being painted, unless in oak, and used for training climbers.

Walls of stone or brick are generally without much character or distinction, but this is the fault of the architect, for they are capable of being made of considerable beauty and utility. A combination of stone and wood is often good as a garden boundary, the lower part being made of stone with high buttresses, the spaces between the latter being occupied by a wood balustrading. Such a wall would look well along a terrace walk, which was not of sufficient importance to demand a stone terracing.

As the fence is the boundary to the garden proper, so is the edging to the beds and borders, and though this is a very humble class of garden furniture, it may not be passed over. It sometimes happens that live edging, either of turf or box, is not desirable, and some artificial form is required, which will prove at any rate inoffensive. In districts where it can be obtained, nothing looks better than undressed stone, laid along the edge of the path. There is no particular necessity for making the pieces "toe the line;" they will look all the better if unevenly placed and allowed to become moss-grown. In large, formally arranged gardens, dressed stone is necessary as an edging to beds and grass, and though conspicuous at first, and somewhat suggestive of the curb round a grave, this effect soon wears off as the stone becomes weathered. Where stone is unobtainable, a simply designed edging in terra-cotta had best be employed; the design should be absolutely free from any form of decoration whatever. The scallops, twisted ropes, and foliated patterns are a desecration of good taste, and are only seen in the worst style of gardens.

CHAPTER VII

SUNDIALS AND STATUARY

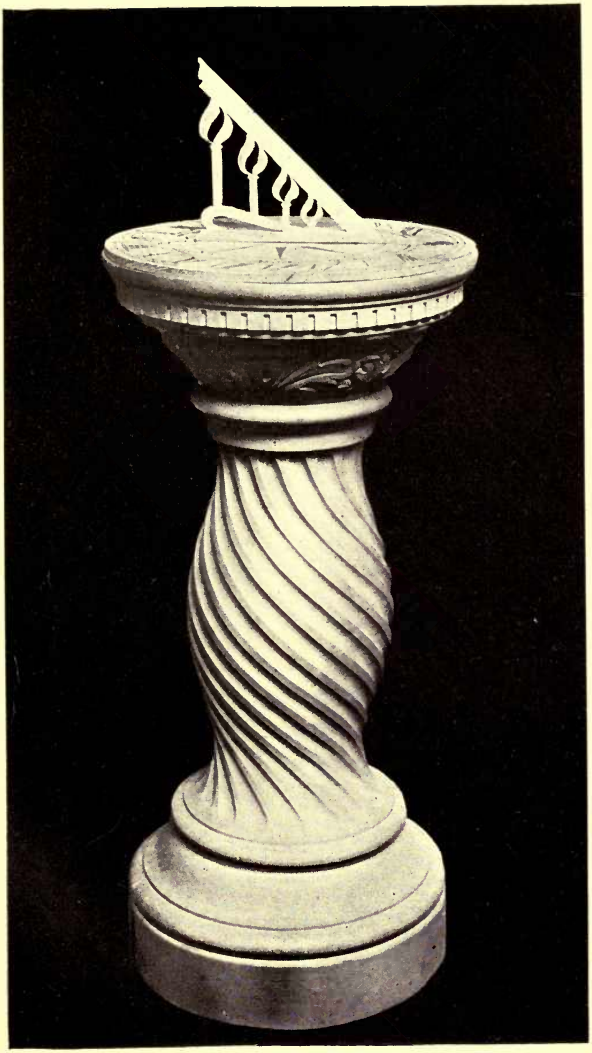
"True as the dial to the sun,
Although it be not shin'd upon."

BUTLER.

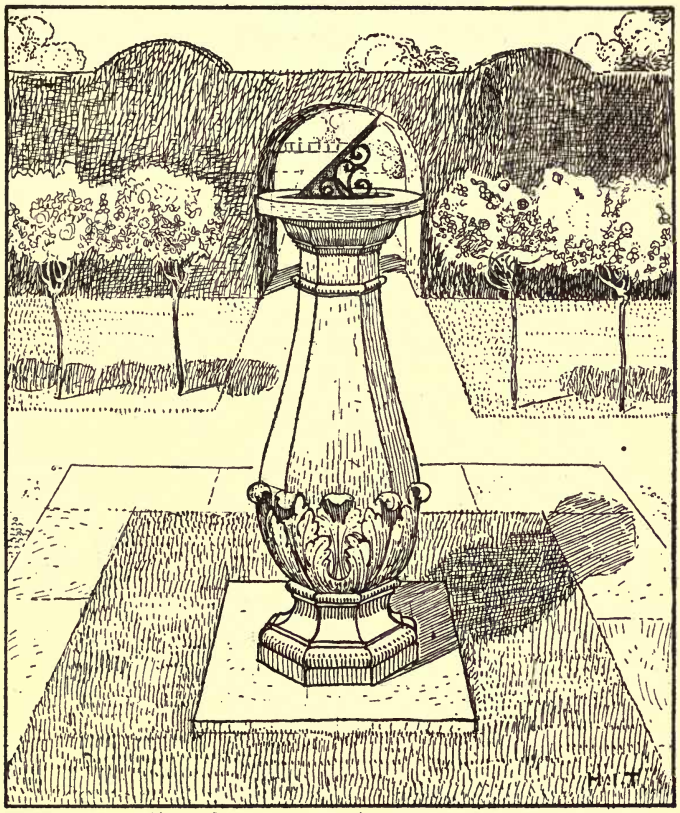
THERE is something so suggestive in the thin band of shadow cast by the finger of the old dial, that even the most frivolous feel sobered, almost awed, when we see one of these quaint objects in the garden. Of late years a growing fashion has set in for reintroducing sundials into English gardens, where, once met with frequently, they have too long been banished. The first mention of the sundial occurs in the well-known passage in Isaiah, and in later times we read that they were frequently placed on public buildings, where they afforded the passers-by a rough idea of the time of day. It was not until the sixteenth century, however, that their use in gardens became common, and from that date their merely utilitarian value may be said to have steadily diminished. Though no one would now think of measuring time by the shadow on the dial's face, even were it possible in our flickering and uncertain sunshine, few will deny that the artistic value and old-world charm of a sundial of satisfactory design, entitles it to a worthy place in the gardens of to-day. Yet in spite of the desirability of making free use of this particular feature, and the excellent effect which may be obtained by

exercising care and taste in the selection of object and site, the sundial is capable of becoming stupid and meaningless when carelessly employed. There is something almost ridiculous in the perky little cast-iron dial, painted a vivid green, which adorns, or rather disfigures, the exact centre of a microscopic grass-plot in a villa garden of my acquaintance. It is so aggressively new that one feels it is there under false pretences—a relic of the dim and shadowy past, masquerading as the latest production of a scientific age. Whatever be the design chosen for the garden dial, and whatever be the material in which such design is carried out, there must be a semblance of antiquity, otherwise its greatest charm is lost. For this reason, cast iron is entirely unsuitable for the construction of the pedestal. Wood is fairly satisfactory, though it is liable to decay unless frequently painted or varnished, a proceeding which cannot on any account be recommended.

Although it is very important to secure a really artistic design, the question of site demands even more attention. There are numbers of gardens, charming enough in themselves, where the most beautiful sundial ever fashioned has no possible chance of appearing anything but incongruous and out of place. Conversely, there are to be found in not a few of our old country gardens, vacant sites which are practically ideal in every way. In this chapter we are considering a class of garden furniture, which lays no claim to be other than purely ornamental—pergolas, archways, and vases may all assist in the decorative scheme, but they serve a useful purpose as well. Therefore, if the garden, no matter what its size, does not contain a spot where a sundial may be fittingly placed, then under no consideration whatever should the desire to possess so interesting an object lead to its introduction. We have our watches and clocks to register to fractions of a second, and there is no possible



DOULTON SUNDIAL



THE CHISWICK SUNDIAL.

excuse for turning our gardens into show-places for specimen sculptures and examples of the wood-carver's skill.

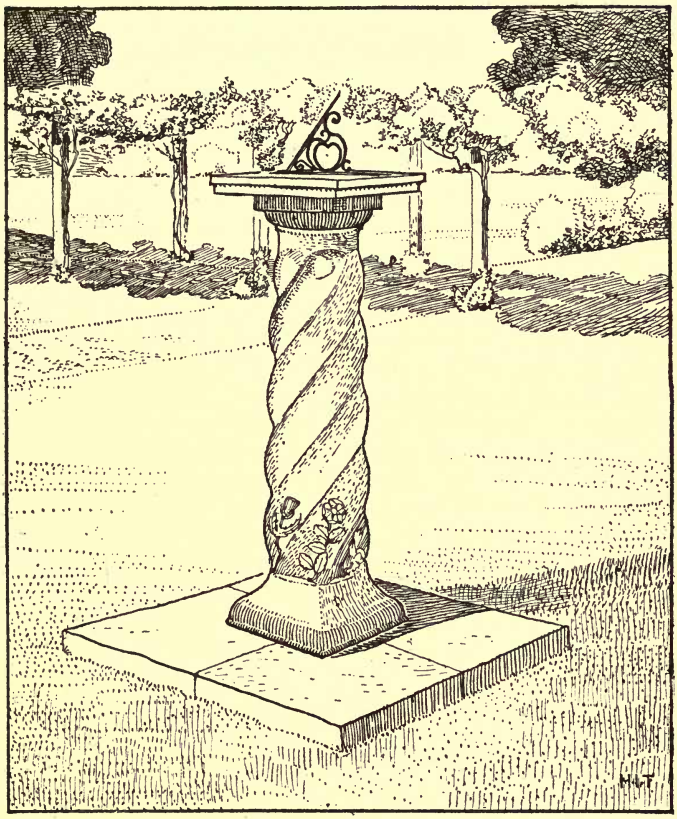
The old-fashioned country garden generally has some spot where a sundial will prove both picturesque and entirely suitable. Not so the villa strip or methodically arranged suburban plot, whose uncompromising newness would make the addition of so venerable an object a fatal anachronism. I have in mind the ideal site for a sundial—a small enclosure of close-shaven turf, bounded on all sides by hedges of clipped yew, with a narrow entrance at either end. Here we have a tiny court, shut out from the sight, if not the sounds, of the outer world, where with a book we may retire for an hour's leisure from the labours of the garden proper. Such a spot would be dull and uninteresting without the sundial, but with it as the central object, and the dark shadows of the sombre yews lengthening on the grass, a garden picture is complete. Such an arrangement may only be possible in gardens of some magnitude, but whenever possible, the dial should be so placed that from it no buildings or other signs of modernity are visible. Often the end of a blind walk will form an excellent position in which to place a stone or wooden dial, the path being ended in an ample sweep, so that there is sufficient space to walk round the base of the pedestal. A simply constructed seat would fittingly occupy the end, and if an embrasure existed in the wall or hedge, one of the semi-circular forms could be made to fit it exactly.

Occasionally sundials are placed with good effect at the junction of four paths, especially when these run from the semi-wild parts of the garden. Where the situation is flat and inclined to be formal, or where the paths simply bisect an even stretch of lawn, no good effect can be gained by so doing. Though it would be pointless to place a sundial in a much shaded situation,

the presence of trees in the vicinity greatly adds to the effect obtained, especially if stone be the material employed. Similarly, flowers—not stiffly grown bedding-out stuff, but the free-growing annuals, poppies, the wild tangle of cornflowers, and sweetly scented mignonette, all help to make a picture, when planted carelessly near at hand. Grass paths which widen out into a circle offer a convenient site, of which advantage may be taken. Among the roses, too, in the rose garden the dial will be quite appropriate; and silent beside the riot of beauty which all too quickly fades, will point its message of fleeting time more than ever significantly. Other suitable positions will occur to all, and so long as good taste and an eye for the fitness of things govern the choice of a site, there is little fear but that the sundial will prove a valued and valuable acquisition to the garden scene. There are plenty of objects far more intrinsically beautiful, but the real charm of the dial lies in its sentimental interest, and the thoughts and feelings which are aroused in all but the most unthinking by its presence. Hence we cannot be too careful that we only use it where it is absolutely free from incongruity of surroundings, and especially must we avoid making it share the honours with the products of the cheap nurseryman, and the barefaced enormities of the jerry-builder.

Having disposed somewhat of the question of site, we may briefly consider the form and construction of the dial itself. The essential parts are the style and the dial face, the former consisting either of the edge of a metal plate or of a small rod, made parallel to the axis of the earth and pointing towards the north pole. The face is marked with lines indicating the direction of the shadow for the several hours of the day. These are the essential parts, and, of course, can only be made by the expert; the pedestal or support, which may be simple or elaborate, according to the taste or means of the buyer, requires no

TERRACE AND SUNDIAL IN ARTIFICIAL STONE



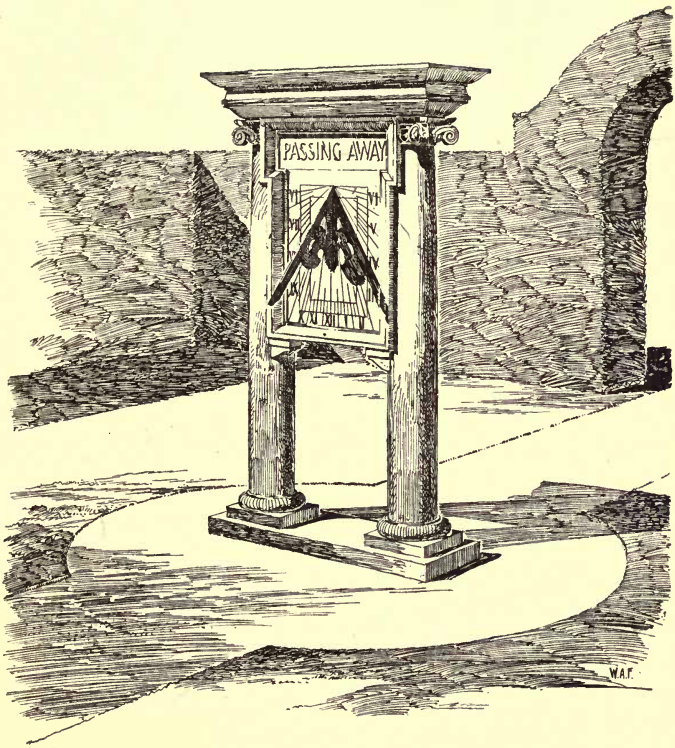
A "PULHAMITE" SUNDIAL.

special skill in construction. Some of the cheaper makes of sundials are by no means accurate, and before purchasing a second-hand specimen, it is well to obtain advice as to its reliability. In the designing of the base and pedestal there is much scope for artistic skill, and there are several firms who turn out really excellent work. Simplicity and graceful outline are the chief points to be considered—in the former case, because the whole idea of the sundial is opposed to showy, florid workmanship; and, for the latter reason, that, except on close examination, little is seen but the general shape. In gardens of large size, and where the furniture must to a certain extent be proportionate, there may be some excuse for pretentious figures bearing aloft the dial-plate. In such cases the idea of a sundial is generally lost, and the central object is dwarfed by its supporters; still, as a piece of sculpture, the group may be of value, though not in the sense in which it was intended. For the small garden, nothing can exceed the good effect obtained by the use of a simple pedestal placed on a slab of stone. The lines of the design should be bold and flowing, and there should be no fancy scroll-work or attempts at the surface scratching, which so many artists are fond of exploiting. With a choice of some hundreds of patterns, the modern gardener should not be at a loss to decide on one to his liking, and in addition there are several good artists who will design specially, or adapt the owner's suggestions into artistic form.

The motto is an important point, and seems particularly appropriate to an object which is ever seeking to read us a silent lesson. Many will be able to suggest suitable inscriptions culled from their store of authors, and for those who prefer to procure their sundial, motto included, the makers generally have a considerable choice. Some are too cynical to be pleasant, others too obviously moralising to be acceptable, whilst inscriptions in Greek

and Latin may serve as an unkind cut to those of us who have allowed our classics to rust. Among mottos which may be considered appropriate are the following, though they are only given that they may suggest others equally desirable: "I only mark the bright hours;" "My hours are few, thine are many;" "There is no return of time which has flown;" "Bright be thine hours," and many others. Having our dial with motto and pedestal complete, we must have it fixed in position by a skilled workman, for the amateur will find its correct adjustment quite beyond him. Surrounded with the old-fashioned flowers, which kept it company in the gardens of long ago, may the old sundial be restored to favour once more. In these days of bustle and hurry we need not be offended by its silent reminder that we are only very small after all, and even in our gardens might think less of our own skill and importance.

Garden statuary does not commend itself to every one, but if employed judiciously, excellent effects may be obtained by its use. A few years ago the cost of even comparatively small figures was such that examples were seldom seen, except in the gardens of the very wealthy. This, to a certain extent, safeguarded the practice, for a bad statue was mercifully lost amid the broad surroundings of the show gardens of the early part of the last century. Besides, a costly model, generally, though by no means invariably, possessed some claim on artistic merit. Nowadays, the cheapening of artificial substitutes for stone, and the introduction of vulgar plaster casts, has led to the most frightful errors being perpetrated in modern gardens. Statuary is used in the most reckless fashion—cupids, floras, and winged mercurys positively elbow one another among the flower-beds, and in the evening twilight, when the colours of the landscape have merged into a neutral tint, the staring whiteness of these atrocities asserts itself with painful results. A stonemason's yard, though possibly



A SUNDIAL.

(Made by Mr. White of Bedford.)

containing undoubted works of art, is not a picturesque spot, and the way to make successful use of statuary in the garden is to have as little of it as possible. The vagaries of our climate, too, are all against the adoption of a fashion which is really more suited to the gardens of the sunny South. A lightly clothed stone figure looks terribly cheerless on a cold, wintry day, such as we are not unacquainted with even in the summer months; when, in addition, the features are blackened and disfigured by the action of the weather, Venus becomes perilously like a glorified Aunt Sally! Yet, in spite of certain disadvantages, statuary has its uses in the garden, and it would be foolish to condemn it entirely, because in certain instances it has been tried and found wanting. For emphasising certain points of view, and adding interest to situations which lack some central object to hold the attention, a suitable figure will prove of great value. Occasionally good use may be made of stone, but far preferable are well-executed statues in lead or bronze. The latter materials are not so conspicuous, harmonize more closely with the surroundings, and, being more expensive, are not likely to be utilized for inferior designs.

Before considering the best positions for isolated figures in the garden, it will be well to call to mind the mythological and other characters which are particularly suited for association with flowers, trees, and Nature generally. Neptune with his trident will look sadly out of place on the lawn of a suburban villa; and only the other day I saw a bust of the late Prince Consort mounted on a pedestal, in a thirty-feet-square garden facing a country roadside. Cupid must always be appropriate—according to Marcus Stone, our grandparents preferred the picturesque surroundings of the garden, to act as a setting to the "old, old story." The Dancing Faun, one of the attendants on Pan, and the Roman deity of agriculture and shepherds, is another character which will not be out of place.

Quaint Pan himself, the guardian of the honey-bees, with legs of a goat and playing upon his reeds, is to be found in many of our most beautiful garden scenes. Heavily draped female figures, bearing scrolls or clasping ponderous garlands, are both clumsy and unsuitable; the same may be said of the highly developed athletes, whose muscles may, however, serve to excite the admiration of the garden-boy, and suggest a closer application to the spade as a means of attaining similar development. Lions, either of the couchant or rampant variety, are utterly incongruous in the flower-garden, and the eagles, griffins, and other supporters of the family coat of arms, should not be allowed to trespass beyond the entrance gates.

There is one class of statuary to which I have not referred, that in terra-cotta, one of the most popular materials for garden ornaments of all kinds. Whatever may be said in favour of urns and vases in coloured clay, there can be no defence for its use for garden statuary. The colour is a most difficult one to harmonise successfully with flowers of any description, and the only time when it has the merit of looking even cheerful is in winter, when we are obliged to swathe it in a protective covering of mats. Old leaden figures fetch high prices nowadays, and the more ornate are only suitable for quite large gardens. Small statues may often be picked up fairly cheaply, and, when mounted on a suitable pedestal, form pleasing objects.

Stone busts cannot be said to be in keeping with flowers, or where colour and lightness are predominant, yet we have seen them used with good effect in the vicinity of formal yew hedges, whose sombre shadows they relieve. Even then it is possible to overdo their use, and they become monotonous when placed in stiff rows, guarding the sides of the pathway. Formality in garden design, though not always desirable, becomes almost a necessity where statues are to form part of the

scheme of decoration. They are too stiff and uncompromising to be of any great value where natural effects are closely imitated. As with sundials, statuary may be often used to good effect at the termination of walks. The visitor is inclined to disappointment, if, after following a path for some distance, it stops dead, and he has to retrace his steps. If, however, the walk terminates in a small arbour, or a circular seat, with a bronze or leaden figure on a pedestal as the central object, the ill effect is entirely done away with. Isolated figures on lawns or on bare stretches of gravel path only serve to make the garden appear like the public parks or squares of the metropolis.

The ordinary garden of medium size has little opportunity for the introduction of statuary, and where any doubt exists as to its being appropriate, it will be better not to risk the possibility of failure. In any case, the cheap and nasty casts, which seem to be an irresistible bait, to seaside gardeners especially, are worse than useless —they are positive eyesores. Given an old-fashioned garden with quaint recesses and shady walks, the use of statuary may be advisable, but in the town garden it will be worse than foolish to perpetrate the follies of Versailles, even though it be on a greatly diminished scale.

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CHAPTER VIII

BRIDGES

In gardens which contain either a moat or running stream, some form of bridge becomes a necessity—a necessity, that is, if the piece of water is too wide to be crossed by simpler means, such as a slab of stone or short plank. When used purely for ornamental purposes, bridges frequently look ridiculous, and I have often seen tiny streamlets, hardly more than a foot wide, crossed by pretentious structures, which might fittingly be used to span a raging torrent. In Japanese gardens, bridges are frequently used without fulfilling a strictly utilitarian purpose, but the keynote of such gardens is their artificiality, and our aim should be to avoid this as far as possible. The rustic bridge in the Japanese garden at Holland House is extremely picturesque, but this is mainly owing to its being used as a support for purple clematis and other climbers, whilst pendent from it are baskets of growing plants, whose blossoms are mirrored in the pool beneath. The ordinary bridge which serves as a means of crossing from one part of the garden to another, cannot well be covered with decorative climbers, consequently we must rely more upon its structural beauty, in order to make it a successful addition to the garden scene.

Before considering the style of bridge which will best harmonise with the surroundings, there must be no doubt whatever that a bridge of some kind is a necessity. It is

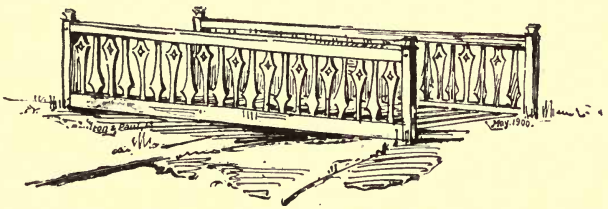
true that a certain section of the stream may not be crossed in any other way; but supposing that immediately above and below this point, the water narrows so that it might be conveniently stepped across, the effect of the bridge will be to suggest trouble which might easily be avoided. A bridge is built to be used, yet we find, in quite a number of gardens, bridges spanning streams which a person without the least pretensions to athletic powers would find no difficulty in stepping over. In such cases, the bridge is often made so large that it is altogether out of proportion to the width of the stream, the two ends being, perhaps, six or seven feet beyond the sides of the banks. In summer, when there is little more than a trickling thread of water, the effect is supremely ridiculous. However, this is nothing compared with the folly of erecting a bridge over dry land, yet I have seen quite an elaborate structure built on a lawn. Of course it was covered with a growth of creepers, and in summer looked extremely gay, but there was no mistaking it for a bridge, pure and simple. The only instance where a bridge is required in the garden, except for the purpose of crossing water, is in the case of a deep cleft or sunken walk, but this is rare except in very large pleasure grounds or those situated in a hilly district. Seeing the follies which have been perpetrated, we cannot, then, be too careful that, in the first place, the bridge is a necessity. Having decided this point, the character of the surroundings should be carefully considered, so that the proposed bridge may be thoroughly in keeping.

Of the various materials which may be used for construction, stone is the most desirable, iron the least so. Wood is picturesque, and in some cases answers well enough, but it soon decays, and the cost of continually renewing the structure soon makes it one of the most expensive materials. A well-built bridge of masonry lasts a lifetime, and, providing that the design is not

needlessly elaborate, the effect is good, either in large or small gardens. Some architects have a preference for raising the arch, and the road over it, high above the level of the ground on the bank. This is chiefly a point for individual taste, but such forms are generally inartistic, and the labour of crossing, especially where barrows, water-carts, and other garden impedimenta are concerned, is vastly increased. Where not absolutely level, a rise of a few inches is all that is necessary or desirable. In formal gardens, or where proximity to the house renders some architectural pretension necessary, care should be taken that the bridge is made to harmonise completely with the style or period in question. Excellent bridges may be constructed of rubble, with a simple coping of stone; these structures, when grown over with moss and small ferns, are eminently satisfactory, without being in the least pretentious. The advantage, too, of the latter form is that they can easily be made by local workmen, the owner himself supplying the design. Where solidity is not so necessary, there are numerous forms of wooden bridges which will answer very well while they last, but naturally they are only suited for foot passengers, and are generally too flimsy for even wheelbarrows or water-carts.

The simplest and earliest form of wooden bridge is the fallen tree, and when properly treated, and supplied with a light hand-rail, this often looks extremely well; especially in the semi-wild parts, or where a stream forms the boundary between the garden proper and the orchard or meadow beyond, the simplicity of such a contrivance is sure to be in keeping. Needless to say, the trunk should be of some durable wood, preferably oak, and the sap wood should be carefully removed. Rather than have the log sawn through longitudinally—though this is the most economical plan, giving two bridges from the same tree—roughly trim it with the adze to

secure a firm foothold. A stout post on either bank, and a sapling of sufficient length to reach from one to the other, will make a convenient hand-rail. Rather less primitive, and yet quite simple, is a stout plank to which is nailed a number of short logs, placed close together. These afford a more secure footing in wet weather, and, though lasting only a short time, do not cost much to replace. When newly constructed, neither of these forms are very picturesque, but in a few months they become weathered and moss-grown, and are then both useful and inconspicuous. Where the stream runs between mown turf, as is often the case in gardens



FOOT BRIDGE.

which run down to a river, a rather more elaborate style of bridge is desirable, and where stone is not contemplated, a good design in oak will prove effective. A substantial rail, with plainly turned balusters, will be better than any attempts at ornate embellishment. Fairly good bridges of a somewhat similar character may be procured in deal and larch ; but they last but a short time, and the decay which is so picturesque a feature of the fallen tree, is not suited to any form of garden furniture, which finds a place near the trimly kept lawn or formal bedding scheme.

So far I have not alluded to a form of bridge more met with perhaps than any other—that in the so-called

"rustic" work, and certainly it is not a case of leaving the best until the last. The main idea of the builders of these monstrosities is to outline a fairly substantial structure, and then to crowd it with all the twigs and branches they can lay hands on. When, in addition, the bridge is given a coat of varnish, it becomes sufficiently ugly to ruin the appearance of any garden. "Rustic" work has no single point to commend it, for it is neither the least desirable, nor is it particularly cheap. So long, however, as the demand exists, so long will the makers continue to flood the gardening journals with seductive advertisements of the "readily put together, free on rail" style of goods, which are the bane of the artistic eye.

It seldom occurs that the situation for the bridge can be chosen, so that it may be shown to the best advantage, but occasionally a choice of sites presents itself. Whenever possible, it should be placed in the proximity of trees, either such as may be found beside the walks in the wild garden, or near a patch of flowering shrubs, which look so well fringing the edge of the stream, as it runs through the garden proper. It is never quite satisfactory if the whole of the bridge can be seen at a glance; there is an unfinished appearance about the two ends as they rise abruptly from the level ground. If, however, the approaches are partly screened with foliage, the bald effect is lost, and in many instances artificial planting would be desirable to effect this end. Very good effects can often be obtained by planting one or two free-growing roses, and training them over portions of the wooden bridge. The Rambler section look particularly well, but it is a mistake to cover the whole of the sides with living plants. The bridge is a feature in itself, and its outline should not be in any way obliterated, but only thrown into greater relief. Whilst on the subject of bridges, it may be remarked that in

situations where none of the forms advocated are suitable, the earth-bank, with either a drainpipe or small culvert for the passage of the water, is often possible. Iron bridges are quite unsuitable as an ornamental feature in gardens—they are durable, and that is all, and stone or brick should always be used in preference.

Occasionally we find a small river or running stream of considerable width dividing the garden, and the only means of crossing conveniently would be by the erection of a skeleton iron bridge. Rather than introduce so unpicturesque an object, it might be well to consider the advisability of making use of the "flying boat" for crossing such pieces of water. The boat, which is anchored by a fairly long cable to a post fixed in mid-stream, is generally constructed so that its deck comes level with the gravel walk. A rudder enables the sides of the boat to be kept constantly oblique with the motion of the current, by which means it is propelled from one side of the stream to the other. Where the water is stagnant, the necessity of a bridge may be avoided by the use of a punt, which is drawn from one side to the other by pulling on a wire or rope, which passes through blocks fixed to a post on either bank, and is further secured to the punt itself. However, neither of these methods of crossing water will possibly commend itself to those who have the safety of children to consider. In the great majority of cases, a simple stone or wooden bridge will prove entirely adequate, and when carefully planned will serve, not only a useful purpose, but may prove decidedly ornamental as well.

CHAPTER IX

FOUNTAINS

EVER since the art of gardening took concrete form, designers have realised the desirability of including water, as part of the composition of the ideal garden scene. Whether it be a natural stream or rivulet, about whose banks the garden has been laid, or merely an artificial basin kept filled by means of pipes, gardeners in every age have seized the opportunity of making it a decided feature. To ensure the best results, movement is essential, and so we find that fountains were hailed with delight as affording a means of obtaining new and beautiful effects in the pleasure grounds. In ancient Greece, fountains were dedicated to gods and goddesses, and to these Pausanias makes frequent reference. Herodotus speaks of the celebrated fountain of Pirene at Corinth, which, according to this writer, was constructed of white stone, with numerous cells from which the water flowed into the main basin. The legend connected with it proves that the air of mystery and romance which still clings to our garden fountains was not absent in these early times. It is said that the nymph Pyrene, whose son was killed by Diana, wept so profusely that she was in consequence changed into a fountain. The mood of the fountain truly changes with the weather, for on a dull and cloudy day it is anything but an inspiriting object, whilst in the sunlight its waters flash and sparkle with countless radiant hues.

In a climate such as ours, where too often we sigh for dryness and warmth, water must be introduced with the greatest caution. A fountain is unlike a portable article of furniture: it is a permanency, and must occupy its place in the frosts and snows of winter, as well as in the hot days of summer. How we shudder at the sight of a fountain in mid-winter, the basin filled with ice, and the figures and delicate stonework encrusted with a mantle of frost and snow. Where it forms an unduly prominent object in the garden scene, we are painfully reminded of the summer days which are gone, every time we pass it. Having regard, then, to the limitations which our climate imposes on this particular form of garden ornament, we should be on our guard against erecting large and pretentious styles in places of only medium size. With this, the worst has been said, and, when judiciously used, the fountain will prove an undoubted acquisition in the lordly show-place, or the garden of humble extent.

The first necessity, before a fountain can be considered, is the assurance that there is an abundant supply of water. Nor is this caution unnecessary, for there are to be found in English gardens numbers of fountains which invariably "run dry" during the months when they are most observed. An empty fountain is a wretched object, sufficient to spoil any garden, and no gardener with an eye to the fitness of things will hesitate in removing it promptly. Where the water is obtained at a high rate from a public company, and the cost of keeping it running except on special occasions is prohibitive, we should hesitate before introducing a fountain at all. Its proper use is to serve as a means for raising a jet or jets of water, the music of which will prove grateful on a hot summer's day; it is not an architectural ornament, and, failing its avowed purpose, is both meaningless and ugly.

Where the pressure of water available is but small, the drooping fountain is often erected. This generally

takes the form of a vase or tazza-shaped receptacle, standing in the centre of a larger basin or pond ; the water fills the tazza to the brim, and overflows into the outer vessel. In this case, the water in the head only requires to be at the same height as the extreme upper edge of the vessel from which it is to issue. Though not out of place in the formal garden, this class of fountain is not entirely satisfactory, the graceful effect of a rising column of water falling in clouds of spray being entirely absent. Still, if a fountain is decided upon, and only a moderate supply of water is obtainable, it will be better to employ it, rather than have a feeble jet rising only a few inches. It is surprising the numbers of garden fountains which are continually out of order—either they are stopped up, there is no water, or the pipes have burst. Often the basin has been filled up with soil, and planted with geraniums and other bedding plants—a ridiculous means of utilising an object, the real nature of which is obvious. The jet fountain must have the head of water so situated that it shall be several inches higher than the top of the column issuing from the bore. The latter should be smaller than that of the conduit pipe by a fourth part. The pipes should be laid at such a depth that they will be secure from injury by frost, and all plumbing work had best be entrusted to a man who thoroughly knows his business. Another point requiring attention is the need which exists for protecting the structure from damage by ice. To ensure this there must be no coping or ornamental rim overhanging inwards, which will be broken in pieces directly the sheet of ice in the pond lifts. By constructing the sides so that they slope evenly from top to bottom, there will be no hindrance to free expansion. There is no need to enter more fully into details which are purely technical, and properly belong to the duly qualified engineer, but there is one point in connection with fountains which may be

FOUNTAIN IN ARTIFICIAL STONE

fairly stated. They belong to a class of garden furniture which is in the nature of a luxury, and except on a small scale they are expensive luxuries as well. Therefore, unless we can afford to purchase a really good design, have it carried out in durable materials, and fixed in position by experienced workmen, the fountain is almost certain to turn out a failure and an eyesore.

In Italy, the home of the fountain, stone or marble is nearly always employed in their construction ; in a country where blue skies and brilliant colour effects reign supreme, there can be no objection to the use of so cold a material. In England, stone is apt to prove somewhat of a failure ; it is dreary and depressing, and either lead or bronze give better effects. Besides, stone is apt to discolour in a somewhat unsatisfactory manner, presenting the appearance of mildewed decay, rather than picturesque old age. Lead is a very suitable material, as its discolouration nearly always takes a picturesque form, and when further enriched with a growth of moss and lichens, leaden fountain figures are extremely beautiful. Marble is not to be thought of for outdoor work, even were its cost far less than it is, for the decay, which serves only to increase the charm of other substances, is but a blemish on what should be spotless purity. Cast-iron fountains are generally ugly to a degree, though some of the simpler forms would be better than they are, if their owners would but refrain from painting them with an annual coat of vivid green. An iron fountain surrounded by a clinker-built rockery is not in the best possible taste, yet not only in public gardens and squares, but in private grounds as well, we too often see such an arrangement carried out.

In quite small gardens, a simple basin of stone—the artificial substitute is both cheap and durable—with a small bronze or leaden figure holding the jet, will prove about the best form which can be adopted. Dolphins, mermaids, and marine monsters generally, savour too

much of the seaside aquarium, and, besides, have no associations with purely garden scenes. Where larger and more important designs are considered appropriate to the surrounding, as in the purely formal or Italian style of garden design, the central jet may be elevated above tiers of basins, into which the water falls and finally descends into the pond. The good effect of large fountains is often spoilt by having the water thrown in too many directions. In order to look graceful it should spurt from the central shaft outwards, and not be met with showers of spray launched from other jets concealed round the rim of the basin. One of the most absurd arrangements connected with the artificial display of water in the garden, is that of placing a jet in the centre of a large pond with natural surroundings. A single column of water rising from the calm waters of a lily pond, only serves to mar the shadows and reflections to which these spots owe so much of their beauty.

The situation for the fountain will depend entirely upon whether it is simple or elaborate in form. When there is much stone or metal work, or where the design is embellished with groups and statuary, there is but one place where it will prove suitable—the formal garden. Associated with vases, balustrading, and other architectural features, it will be quite in keeping with a florid and pretentious style of garden design, which entails vast expense and brings but little reward. The small garden, where Nature's methods of planting are more closely followed, need not be without its fountain, but in this case it must be of totally different design. A small basin, in which may be planted water-lilies, the Cape Pond Weed, and flowering rushes, should be sunk as inconspicuously as possible near to an arbour, or in the flagged pathway between the rows of herbaceous flowers. If there is an old yew hedge or clump of dark-hued evergreens, the fountain will look well if the jet is made to

rise in front of them. The prismatic hues of the water will only be seen in their full beauty, if they form a high light against a background of deep sombre shadow. Unless the basin is very small a few fish may be kept in it, and by growing aquatic plants they may be kept healthy, and will not require feeding. Lilies should be planted in pots or boxes, and these afterwards sunk into the basin ; on the approach of winter, they may be drawn up again and taken into warmer quarters.

One can hardly think of fountains without recalling visions of Versailles, and in our own country Chatsworth, where the pranks of the water gardener are allowed full scope. The Chatsworth "waterworks" are the most extensive of their kind in any private garden in England, but the modern gardener will find nothing here worthy of imitation. The tree, under whose shade visitors are invited to rest, and which presently, at the turn of a stop-cock, proceeds to spurt forth water on the luckless victims of a practical joke, truly makes us wonder at the manner in which a former generation took its outdoor pleasures. Far more beautiful are the fountains in the gardens of the celebrated Villa d'Este at Tivoli. Laid out by one of the most celebrated garden designers of the day, Cardinal Ipolito d'Este, the waters of the Anio supplied the grounds with cascades, fountains, and rivulets galore. The great feature of these fountains, and one which we may well endeavour to copy, is their studied simplicity—just a single spray of water, in the larger ones forty or fifty feet high, falling in clouds of misty spray. The giant cypresses and the peach-coloured blossoms of the acacias form notes of varying colour, and the moss-grown balustrades and lofty terraces lead upwards to an almost interminable height. Everywhere are fountains—tiers of them—sparkling in the sunshine and reflecting the exquisite colours of the surrounding vegetation. No pretentious figures are here, just the single jet of water

rising clear and straight, and falling back with rhythmic splash into the moss-grown basin beneath. We cannot grow the roses, tritomas, and sweet-scented jasmine as they do in the gardens of sunny Italy, but there is much that we may imitate with advantage in their ways of introducing water into the scene. Pretentious stonework is out of place in English gardens, but among the flowers and trees there can be no more grateful sight in the still days of summer than the feathery spray from the moss-grown fountain.

FOUNTAIN IN ARTIFICIAL STONE (SECOND EXAMPLE)

CHAPTER X

URNS, VASES, TUBS, ETC.

THE use of portable receptacles for containing shrubs and flowering plants has much to commend it, and comparatively uninteresting gardens may be much improved by their judicious employment. Unfortunately, as with many other forms of garden furniture, this style of decoration is often carried to excess, and instead of adding to the attractions of the garden scheme, either wearies by monotonous repetition, or else disfigures by reason of its unsuitability or the lack of taste displayed in its arrangement. Highly decorated vases are only suited to gardens where some architectural feature is introduced, either in the form of terracing or cut stonework of some description. Quite plain vases may be introduced with comparative safety, except in the wilder or natural portions, where cultivation, in the accepted sense, is but little practised. Tubs and boxes, if constructed of good materials simply put together, are, as a rule, unobtrusive, and consequently suited to most gardens of varying styles, but even these require considerable care in arrangement, if they are to be made effective. Urns, which differ from vases, in that they are provided with a cover, are useless for containing plants, but are often employed for purely ornamental purposes. Though quite out of place, save in connection with a somewhat formal style of gardening, urns occasionally look fairly well when surmounting an old wall, the ivy or creepers

on which are allowed to partially hide the shape of the vessel. Urns are constructed in a variety of materials—stone, terra-cotta, and lead, the latter, though somewhat prohibitive in cost, being perhaps the most beautiful. The well-known specimens at Hampton Court are good examples, though naturally they would look out of place in gardens of small extent. Both leaden and terra-cotta urns may be used in conjunction with stone, either natural or artificial, but it is fatal to associate them with brickwork of any description. Cheap, common models are not to be recommended for any position, but those possessed of good and artistic shapes may use them as finials to pillars, and as a ready means of breaking the straight lines of terracing, and to give a finish to garden stairways.

Vases may be purchased in designs suited to almost any requirements, so that there is really no excuse for introducing specimens which are out of harmony with their surroundings. Perhaps they look best when placed at intervals along a stone terrace, and they are then of distinct value as enabling a note of colour to be introduced, where formerly drab monotony prevailed. Filled with drooping plants, gaily coloured pelargoniums, fuchsias, or sulphur and white marguerites, they may be made exceedingly handsome. The makers of garden vases, though expert enough in designing the ornamental parts, frequently fail to bear in mind the use to which the vase is to be put. Consequently we find that there is often little or no room for soil, and the few plants which can be crammed in soon show signs of exhaustion. Always select a style which has plenty of room for free root

CIRCULAR TUB.

TAZZA

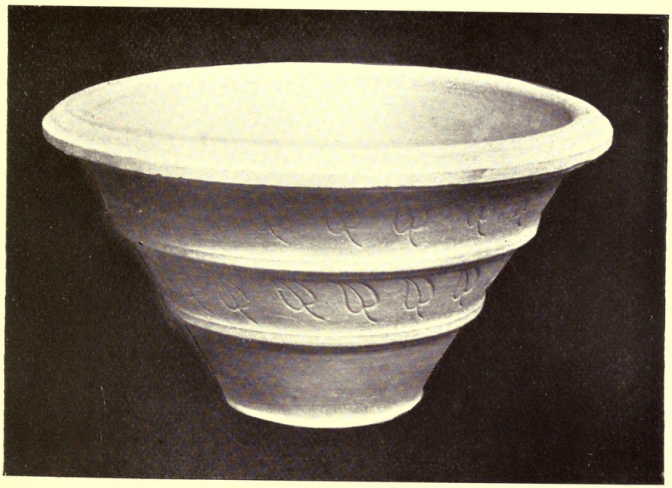
growth, and especially avoid those which have a narrow neck. When vases are mounted on pedestals, they should only be used very sparingly, and not, as is the case in some gardens, dotted about until the eye is wearied by their number. The corners of lawns are the spots most usually chosen for vases, but it is questionable whether this is the best position which can be afforded. An uninterrupted stretch of turf is usually pleasing to the eye, and rarely requires to be broken up, and it is quite a mistaken idea to suppose that a vase gives a suitable "finish" to the angle. It would be better to reserve the vase, with its note of colour, for dull corners, where, perhaps, a heavy mass of foliage becomes unduly monotonous. At the entrance to shrubberies, or to mark the junction of two or more pathways, a vase with its floral contents is often the only means of introducing colour into the scene. In these latter instances, a good effect is gained by allowing the base of the pedestal to be partly concealed with a tangle of ground ivy, a few shoots being encouraged to grow upwards to meet the trailing plants.

Terra-cotta is an excellent material for garden vases, but the warm flower-pot red should be rigorously avoided, as coloured flowers seldom harmonise well with it. An advantage of terra-cotta is that the sides of the cup can be made quite thin, thus allowing more room for soil than is possible where stone is the material employed in construction. The less embellishment there is on the outside of the vase the better, as such decoration would only be hidden by the overhanging creepers. Shrubs, or other stiffly growing subjects, cannot be considered as suitable for raising high above the ground, and the plain vase with good outline, filled with trailing plants, is the only form which can be advocated for general use.

Tubs and boxes are extremely useful for containing delicate shrubs and plants, which require to be wintered in

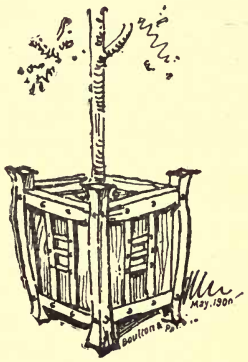
warm quarters, and though they have not the ornamental appearance of tazzas and vases, several neat, and not inartistic, forms are to be obtained. In southern Europe, the flat housetops and balconies are rendered gay and interesting by the practice of growing beautiful flowering plants in wooden receptacles; indeed, to many who have no gardens, this is the only means of growing flowers which can be adopted. The orangeries, which are still to be found in some of our large gardens, were built to accommodate half-hardy plants in tubs and boxes during the winter months. A few years ago, gardeners used to think highly of the decorative value of orange trees grown in tubs, and the expense of keeping perhaps a hundred or so of these alive was very considerable. The gardens of the Tuilleries used to be dotted with these trees grown in cumbersome boxes, and though many of the specimens were of about as much beauty as mops, the enormous labour of moving them from place to place was thought to be amply justified.

Though many of the Continental gardeners fail to achieve happy results in their manner of growing plants in tubs and boxes, some at least thoroughly understand how to make the practice a success, and in Italy especially we often see styles which are worthy of close imitation. The fault of English amateurs is that they persist in using ugly little wooden buckets, painted a vivid green, often elevating these on tripods of rustic work. Tubs, unlike vases, should always be stood on the ground, and providing that they are well made of some durable wood, they do not require to be ornamented in any way. A sovereign is not too much to pay for one made in well-seasoned oak or teak, the diameter of the top being about sixteen or seventeen inches. They can be stained either a light or a dark shade, and the iron hoops with which they are securely bound may be either painted or galvanised. There are a variety of shapes, round, elliptical,



A DOULTON VASE

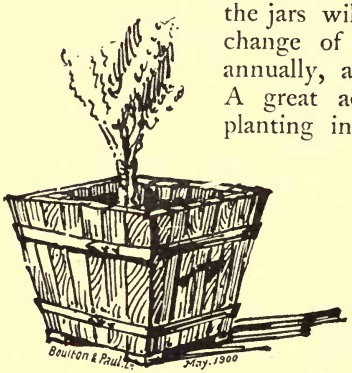
square, or triangular, the two latter forms looking best with rounded corners. The advantage of these well-made articles is that they last a very long time, and being provided with short feet, the bottoms do not rot when standing on damp ground. For rather more money, boxes may be purchased with detachable sides, these being very convenient for growing large shrubs, which require to have fresh soil placed about the roots at frequent intervals. The orange trees in the temperate house at Kew are grown in strongly made tubs of this description, and, apart from their suitability, are really handsome pieces of furniture. For standing on terraces, boxes, either panelled or plain, would look well, especially in creosoted oak, but they should be free from ornamental iron clamping or decorated handles. Panelled boxes should be battened inside, so that when replanting is necessary, the roots will not be injured. Among plants suitable for growing in tubs are half-hardy shrubs of all kinds, including fuchsias, camellias, hydrangeas, sweet bays, and others; palms and tree ferns often look well, and are much appreciated outdoors during the summer months. Echiverias, aloes, and agave also look well, and their quaint glaucous foliage forms a pleasant relief when seen in proximity to gaily coloured cannas, pelargoniums, and other summer bedding plants. The Blue *Agapanthus* is quite the most popular plant for tubs, and well-grown specimens look very handsome when stood near gateways and other suitable sites.



TUB WITH FEET.

By the exercise of a little ingenuity, the amateur will find that there are other receptacles which may be

pressed into service for holding plants, not the least desirable being the large oil jars which may be procured from Italian warehousemen in London. Sometimes they are covered with wicker work, but naturally this soon rots away, though it is picturesque while it lasts. A hole must be bored at the bottom, and a liberal amount of rough drainage supplied. As the amount of soil which the jars will contain is but small, a change of plants should be made annually, and fresh mould supplied. A great advantage connected with planting in vases and boxes, is that suitable soil may be provided for every class of plant. It is impossible to grow certain subjects satisfactorily in the soil which exists in the beds, but by growing in portable receptacles the requirements of each may be studied to a nicety. Those living in the neighbourhood of potteries, will find no difficulty in having rough clay vessels made to order. These are much to be preferred to the elaborately decorated creations which are far more expensive, and often hideously ugly. The large basket beds which look very handsome in the formal garden are generally constructed of stone, though sometimes oak boughs are used with good effect. On flat stretches of lawn bedding, the baskets help to break the monotony considerably, and when filled with cannas, castor oils, clematis, tropæolums, and trailing plants of luxuriant growth, form a perfect blaze of riotous colour.



SQUARE TUB.

One of the best positions for standing tubs and vases is beside permanent seats and arbours, especially when these

are placed somewhat out of sight of flowers, as, for example, beside gravel walks, recesses in walls, and dull corners of shrubberies. In half-shady situations, hydrangeas look well, and keep their colour much better than in direct sunlight. Sweet-scented flowers would be much appreciated in the proximity of an arbour, heliotropes among others being good for the purpose. Half-hardy plants may be brought from the conservatory or greenhouse, and stood in suitable positions outdoors for the summer months, and in this way pleasing variety may be obtained. The value of these portable receptacles for growing plants and shrubs is greatly increased by their somewhat sparing use ; they soon become unsightly when dotted about with wearisome repetition. In a variety of ways, the pleasures of the garden are bound to be sensibly increased, when each department receives its fair share of attention, not the least deserving being those objects which have been classed together under the style of garden furniture.

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